







THE DRAMATIC POEM OF JOB

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE CHINESE CLASSIC BOOK OF POETRY AND THE CONFUCIAN
ANALECTS, TRANSLATED WITH INTRODUCTIONS AND
ANNOTATIONS.

Right

THE DRAMATIC POEM OF JOB

A CLOSE METRICAL TRANSLATION
WITH CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

BY

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I DEDICATE THIS WORK
TO MY DAUGHTER
IRENE

PREFACE

IN the twenty-eighth chapter of this book we have a remarkable Interlude, which seems to have strayed from some other source,—commencing with an allusion to mining operations and the bringing to light of hidden things of value; and leading up to the consideration of a greater and more important search.

The allusion to mining might almost be applied to the book itself and its study; so much labour has been spent in the elucidation of its difficulties. As time goes on men work with better tools, and profit by others' advances and discoveries. With an increasing knowledge of Semitic lore much light has been thrown on the book in late years; and the learned men who three hundred years ago translated Job would be surprised could they see how their work has been improved upon. The mine, however, is not yet exhausted. And therefore still, as with the rest of our Sacred Writings, the solitary student here, and groups of scholars there,

Toil at the sacred text;—
More fruitful grows the field;
Each generation for the next
Prepares a richer yield.

An endeavour in this direction is here ventured upon, in order to deal with difficulties that still exist, but mainly to make the book as a whole better “understood of the people.”

The Book of Job, it may safely be said, is more heard of than read. Not many persons indeed *can* read it without a struggle, and without mystification, in the form in which they have it. Yet the interest of the book is supreme. Its subject is one that has always powerfully attracted men’s minds, and will do so until the end of all things. Its pages are adorned with sublime passages, some of which are employed in our saddest and most solemn rites, and in our noblest Oratorio; while on many of them are found phrases and sentiments which have passed into our speech as household words. Tennyson, who is said to have been much indebted to the book in parts of *In Memoriam* and *The Two Voices*, spoke of it as the greatest poem whether of ancient or modern times. As a dramatic writing it may almost be called the Passion Play of the Hebrew people.

The literature that has gathered round the book—the numerous translations, commentaries, studies, and discussions of various kinds—testifies also to its interest. The longing of Job, uttered in the climax of his misery, has been more than fulfilled :

“Oh that my words were put in writing ;
That to a book they were committed ;
That on a rock with pen of iron
And molten lead they might forever
Remain engraven !”

I have often wished that his words, and those of his “comforters,” could be put in writing in something like the form and manner in which they were originally composed; that there were a rendering of the poetical portion of the book which should be *metrical*, like the original, and which should also make it easier to be read and understood, yet without deviation from strict accuracy. The Revisers of the Old Testament gave us in 1884 a translation of the book which is on all hands regarded as greatly superior to all former ones. But a company of men could not but translate in prose; and, even in so doing, they were obliged to work under limitations as to expression: conditions were imposed on them which curtailed their freedom. (See the enumeration of these at the commencement of their Preface.) They have given a more literal and accurate rendering, but scarcely a poetical one, nor in language which they might have chosen if unhampered by rules; in the main we have Hebrew rather than English idioms, and passages that are certainly not readable or intelligible English. Sometimes these passages altogether lack sequence.¹ Reverence for the “very

¹ e.g., for xxxvi. 18–21, how rugged is this:—

Because there is wrath, beware lest thou be led away by thy sufficiency;

Neither let the greatness of thy ransom turn thee aside.

Will thy riches suffice, that thou be not in distress,

Or all the forces of thy strength?

Desire not the night,

When peoples are cut off in their place.

Take heed, regard not iniquity:

For this thou hast chosen rather than affliction.

words of Scripture" was doubtless one reason for these limitations ; and fear of offending the scruples of those who still hold to the belief in verbal inspiration, another ; and indeed, though it must be and is admitted that the meaning is of more importance than the letter, this reverent regard for *ipsissima verba* must in all cases contribute in a more or less degree to such a result.

The three desiderata I have named have here been attempted to be achieved. The difficulties have been great, and the task a long and arduous one, since not only has the Hebrew text, with its many exotic words, required to be carefully studied, but also the results of the labours of scholars of different schools of interpretation. I have even some hope that my renderings and notes may be of assistance to the student of Hebrew.

Some account of the difficulties that waylay translators of Hebrew poetry may here be given. The "flow" of poetic diction, as we Westerns like it, is arrested, firstly, by the fact that in the Hebrew, as a rule, each line is a distinct (though dependent) sentence in itself. There is a sparing use of participles and of relative pronouns, therefore of relative clauses in a sentence ; the lack of which in our modern writing would appear most crude.¹ There is a certain monotony also in the constantly recurring *parallelisms*, or echo-

¹ In relief of this crudeness I have sometimes turned the second lines into relative clauses ; e.g., in iii. 18 :

"There side by side repose the captives,
Who hear the tasker's voice no longer,"

instead of *they* hear, etc.

ings of line to line. Parallelism, which is one of the chief characteristics of Hebrew poetry, and graceful there as *thought-rhythm*, is foreign to our systems of verse-construction, where we prefer rhythm of *words* or rhyme. The monotony is lessened, of course, when an idea in the first line of a verse is developed in the second, or when for a parallel we have an *antithesis*. These peculiarities must perforce remain in a translation.

The connection between one *verse* and another is sometimes difficult to perceive; and even when conjunctive particles are used these are often ambiguous. For example, the conjunctive "and," which is prefixed to a word, may signify at the beginning of the second line of a distich, "but," "even," "yea," "then," "so," "for," "in order that," "while," and (as in v. 7) "as" (for "and so"). Only an understanding of the drift of the passage can determine how it is used.

The scarcity of *tenses* in the Hebrew language is another source of ambiguity. There are only two tenses, the perfect and the imperfect, or rather the complete and the incomplete, to mark whether a thing has been done, or was being done, or whether it will or may or should or *might have been* done. In the very first sentence of this poem (iii. 3) I have felt bound to take the imperfect tense of the verb as the pluperfect subjunctive or optative, in order to make sense of it.

There is abundant scope, under these circumstances, for variation of rendering, and opportunity also for greater clearness of expression.

In offering this translation to the judgment of scholars, I desire to say that every word in the original has been carefully investigated, and every sentence weighed. My aim has been, while preserving as far as possible the Scriptural modes of expression, to make the book (as before stated) easier to read, and easier to comprehend. And to this end I have availed myself of the investigations of such masters of the language and of the subject as Professors Driver and Davidson, and others whose names appear in the footnotes. The former's critical notes in the Revised Version, and the latter's invaluable commentary (in the *Cambridge Bible for the use of Schools and Colleges*), have been of the greatest service to me throughout. I have occasionally felt obliged to venture to suggest what I consider improved interpretations, e.g., in the following passages : iii. 3 ff., xii. 4, xvi. 7, xvii. 15, xix. 20, xxi. 17, xxvi. 4, 5, xxvii. 12, xxviii. 27, 28, xxx. 2, xxxi. 18, xxxiv. 18, xxxv. 4, xxxvi. 30.

The metre adopted was suggested by such well-known lines as

“There do the wicked cease from troubling,”
“Oh that I knew where I might find Him,”
“I know that my Redeemer liveth,”

and others. And it falls in fairly well with that of the Hebrew, which has more or less regularly alternating long and short syllables. The Hebrew line is composed generally of seven or eight syllables;¹ but there are

¹ Sometimes less and sometimes more ; but we do not know the rules for scansion and pronunciation of certain terminations of words. See

some shortened ones, *e.g.*, the last line of the third chapter, "Still cometh turmoil," and xiv. 1, "Man born of woman"; and these peculiarities I preserve.

The three speeches of Eliphaz seemed to require longer lines, and I have lengthened these lines by two more syllables. And this irregularity will, I hope, be forgiven, as breaking a little the monotony.

Last year (1911) Dr. E. G. King published a manual on *The Early Religious Poetry of the Hebrews* (Cambridge University Press), to which my attention was directed by Professor Driver, but after my work was done. In this excellent little book a few specimens are given from Job, among others. The writer discards metre, and prefers the Hebrew method of accentuation. He remarks that "it is highly probable that Hebrew 'metre' consisted, not in long and short syllables, but in the rhythmical beat of the accents." These, which are three to the line—sometimes more—he illustrates in his specimen renderings, and marks thus,—as in the pointing or phrasing of the Psalms for singing:—

" Lo thése are párts of His wáys ;
 The mere whíspér abóut Him that's héard :
 But the thúnder of His míght, who can knów : "
 (End of ch. xxvi.).

It would be interesting to have the whole Poem so translated, but would it not be a departure from all Western forms of verse (that are intended to be read and not *chanted*), and would there not be many jarring Dr. G. H. Bateson-Wright's suggested rules for scansion (*Book of Job*, p. 26; Williams & Norgate).

and jumbled lines? I can scarcely think the writer would advise this, and rather conclude that he is only illustrating the use of accents in the Hebrew.

The following are two verses of the original, with transcription. I omit the accents, except those that mark pause, and merely mark in the transcription some long syllables, and some decidedly short and *half* syllables. The verses are taken from xxix. 2, 3. The first two lines will be seen to correspond exactly with my own :

**כִּי יְפָנֵן כְּנַרְמִילָקֶם
בִּיכִי אַלְוֹהַ יְשַׁכְּבָנִי
בְּהַלּוֹ נָרוֹעֵלִי רַאֲשִׁ
לְאוֹדוֹ אַלְפַּה הַשְׁׁךְ :**

Mi yittěněni ch'yarhei kédem,
Chiméi Ělōah yishměréni ;
Běhillo néro 'áléi róshí,
Léoro élch hóshech.

The exigencies of metre, of course, occasionally compel the use of little circumlocutions, but I think in all cases the strict meaning of each verse is guarded. Sometimes to effect this an additional line was required ; in no case has a difficulty, I hope, been slurred over. There are many three-line verses in the original itself.

It may be remarked here that Dr. Dillon, in his *Sceptics of the Old Testament*, eliminates all verses in Job which consist of more than two lines. Following the German Professor, Bickell, he accepts nothing in the book which does not fall into *quatrains*—two verses of two lines each; but to procure his four lines he has recourse sometimes to ingenious and arbitrary methods.¹

¹ Some passages are altogether dislocated. E.g., in xxi., verses 8 to 11 are taken in the order 9, 10, 8, 11; and verses 19, 20 are followed by verses 21, 22 of chapter xiv.!

Finding a version called the Saidic, or Thebaic, version in the library of the Propaganda at Rome, Professor Bickell had claimed for it that it must be a translation of the original Septuagint text without some later insertions. This version contains 400 fewer verses than the received text ; that is, it contains about three-fifths only of the whole. The remaining two-fifths are regarded as “later disfiguring additions.” Besides all the three-line verses, the Elihu speeches (six chapters) are wanting, as also the descriptions of Behemoth and Leviathan. Better scholars than myself will decide whether this version is to be taken into account or discredited. I would only remark here that among those so-called “disfiguring additions” is a sentence evidently alluded to in the Gospels by Christ. It is in the description of the eagle, or griffon-vulture (xxxix. 26), “Where the slain is, there is she.” This had probably become a proverbial saying long before the time of Christ ; and His words are a slight expansion of them : “Wheresoever the carcase is, there will be the eagles gathered together.” In the Aramaic dialect of Northern Palestine (the language most likely spoken usually by our Lord), only five words would be employed to express this, thus bringing the form of the sentence into closer resemblance with that of Job.¹

It is quite true that in the three-line verses there is, at least in some cases, an absence of parallelism, and

¹ The Syriac reads, tersely : “*Where corpse, there gather eagles.*”

Dr. Dillon's remarks about these have some plausibility ; but in Job there are many *two-line* verses without parallelism ; and the questions arise, Must a poet limit himself either to parallelisms or to distichs ? Do the other Hebrew poets so restrict their art ? Is there not much greater freedom in the Psalms ?

Matters concerning the MSS. and Versions of the Book of Job are beyond the scope of this little book. Bishop Gibson's Introduction to his Commentary on Job ("Westminster Commentaries") may be consulted for information as to these. I have felt bound to adhere to the received Hebrew text (Van der Hooght's edition of it I have used) upon which our English versions are founded.¹ Nor have I ventured to improve upon the Massoretic vowel-pointings, in order to overcome difficulties—a great temptation to translators.² Copyists may have erred in transcribing, but the errors are nowhere of much importance ; and they may have dislocated words or passages ; of these

¹ Renan says : "À l'heure qu'il est, le texte Massorétique doit faire loi." In two places I have, however, followed the Septuagint version, and explained in the notes why I did so.

² The Hebrew was originally written with consonants only, and without any signs for vowels, and some words might have eight or more different pronunciations and meanings [e.g. GDL might be read *gadal*, *gadel*, *gadol*, *godēl*, *g'dol*, *giddēl*, *guddal*, *gaddol*, connected with being great or making great ; and MVTH might be *maveth*, death, or *muth* or *mōth*, to die]. See an example in xxix. 18. Vowel signs were introduced by Jewish scholars, well versed in the language, between the fifth and seventh centuries of our era. S. Jerome, who translated Job into Latin before this time, had, of course, to do so without these helps, and, even with a Jewish teacher, complained that the language was "slippery as an eel" !

latter it has seemed necessary to note only two instances.

The footnotes have become far more numerous than was intended. They are not meant as commentary, but simply as verbal explanations, or as alternative renderings, or as otherwise throwing necessary light on the passages to which they are appended.

The words in brackets are “helping words”; and brackets are used in preference to italics, because the latter (as used in our Bibles) are taken by many people still as words to be *emphasised*! This plan has also the advantage of enabling italics to be used throughout the book for really emphatic words.

W. J.

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THE DRAMATIC POEM OF JOB

OUTLINES OF THE BOOK

THE aim and object of the book are almost sufficiently apparent; but some of its principal features should be here outlined.

It is not enough to say that it illustrates the virtues of patience and fortitude under trials. In the Prologue, indeed, Job displays these virtues, in words that have never been overpassed for sublimity; and it is doubtless in reference to this early portion of the book that S. James points to him as an example. But in the poem he is anything but patient: he is such only in the sense in which a man sick and sore is called *a patient*, i.e., a sufferer.

As Froude remarked, in his *Short Studies*, the book "is no story of a single thing which happened once, but it belongs to humanity itself and is the drama of the trial of man." It goes deeper than into the trials of one man: it grapples with the problem of the moral government of the world; with doubts as to the Divine justice; with the questions, Why do the good and the innocent suffer? and why are the godless and the wicked so often prosperous, sometimes even to the end

of their days? Job is an example of the former, and by him the second question is also urged. Job, a perfect type of man, blameless, upright and God-fearing, while prosperous and happy is put to an extreme trial, that it may be seen whether his service of God and his blameless life are not due alone to his prosperity. He is deprived, at one stroke, of all he possesses, and smitten besides with a loathsome disease. This he bears at first with fortitude and resignation, but after a time doubtful thoughts intervene. He desires to know *why* he suffers, and, when friends come to condole with him, breaks out into loud complaints, and curses the day when he was born. The words of his friends exasperate him still more. Their coming was to comfort, but their words are "very swords." These friends, three in number, represent different shades of the popular belief at the time, which was that suffering invariably followed upon wrong-doing, secret or open.

"What man e'er perished that was guiltless?
And where have lives of upright men been shortened?"

In this way Eliphaz opens what becomes virtually a debate on the question; and later on he asks Job to consider if he has not "been greatly wicked." All alike proceed to emphasise this view of the matter by quotations, real or invented, of the teaching and tradition of bygone generations. Job, on his part, protests his uprightness, and points to facts as they are: "the tents of brigands prosper," while he himself who had never disregarded "the words of the Holy One" is unjustly and beyond all measure afflicted, and is become the wonder of all good men. He appeals to

God, as conscious of no wickedness ; his one desire is to appear before his Judge and plead his cause at His tribunal ; he even waxes defiant, like Prometheus before Zeus, and makes use of the most vehement and daring language ; he replies effectively to the stinging insinuations of the friends, exposing their irrelevances and their hypocrisy ; and swears he will maintain his integrity as long as his breath remains in him. Not the lightest part of his heavy trial is his treatment at the hands of these “friends.” His mental sufferings, indeed, equal his material ones.

Elihu's part (xxxii.—xxxvii.) is to show that the three friends have failed in their arguments, and to point out to Job that his sufferings may be regarded in the light of a *ransom* (xxxiii. 24; xxxvi. 18). This idea of suffering as a ransom is further put before him in xxxvi. 15 :

“God *saveth* sufferers by their suffering,
Opening their ear by their affliction.”

Elihu, like the others, assumes some guilt in Job. He reproves him, however, especially for his irreverence and blasphemy in charging the Almighty with injustice ; and after descanting on the power of God as exhibited in His wondrous operations in nature, he bids Job see in God not only *power*, but judgment and plenteous justice, which He never can violate.

Finally, from the storm-cloud the Almighty speaks Himself. He does not give an account of His “ways,” in dealing with Job or others ; but, causing, as it were, “all His glory to pass before him” in a magnificent review of the phenomena of creation, animate and inanimate, and the wisdom and purpose underlying all, with the wonderful instincts of living creatures, He

interrogates Job as to all this, and fills him with a profounder sense of what God is, and consequently of his own littleness and incompetence. Then He asks him :

“Should one contending with the Almighty
Be His reprobation? He that bringeth
Charge upon God, this let him answer.”

Again Job's daring attitude towards God in his speeches—his sole fault—is reproved by the question :

“Wouldst thou, then, nullify My justice?
Wouldst put Me in the wrong, to right thee?”

and in sublime irony Job is bidden to array himself with the majesty and glory of Deity and exhibit his power by undertaking the government of men and things himself! Only one who is not merely almighty but all-wise can govern the immensity of created things, or can say whether all is going rightly or wrongly in the world of men. Job had already on two occasions (chapters ix. and xxvi.) expressed most eloquently his sense of God's *omnipotence*; he required to be convinced of the purpose and care which guided the power.

It is this profounder view of God, here set before him, with these reproofs, that convicts Job and humbles him, removes dark doubts from his mind, and makes him repudiate his rash words and “repent in dust and ashes.”

“Who am I?” and “Who art thou?” are, in substance, the questions which run through the Almighty's whole discourse. There is no reasoning about *justice*. There is no reference to any former goodness or wickedness in Job. He is left to infer, like Abraham, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” It is enough that God is God.

The *dénouement*, so far, is not, to us, completely satisfactory. The problem which has been under discussion is not plainly solved; (nor is the further *dénouement* in the Epilogue, where Job is again made prosperous, a full solution of it). But, as Davidson remarks here, though “we may feel that the revelation might have been different, that it might have contained other traits,” yet “the traits which we desiderate could hardly, perhaps, have been exhibited on an Old Testament stage. It was not the design of the revelation . . . to communicate new truths to Job, but to make him feel the truth which he knew.”

In the Epilogue, however, we find one point settled. We find there a recognition that Job had been right in his general statement of the facts of God’s providence (notwithstanding his audacious judgments upon them for which he had been rebuked); and a condemnation of the popular beliefs put forward by the three friends.

JOB'S BELIEF IN A REDEEMER, OR DELIVERER

SOMETHING must be said here respecting the famous passage, xix. 25-27, which could not well be introduced into the page itself. It will be seen that the word "Redeemer" is retained, but the footnote explains in what sense. "Vindicator" might have been used, but the Hebrew *Goel* includes more than vindication. "Deliverer," perhaps, would best suit the case; but "Deliverer liveth" did not seem to read well. It is not suggested that Job had any prophetic vision of a Redeemer such as has been revealed by the Incarnation of the Son of God. He did not know of God as having a distinction of Persons. It can only be said that his lofty words adumbrated the Christian truth; they surely cannot be called a prophecy, in the sense that he was consciously looking forward to Christ. Once Job regretted that there was *not* a Daysman, *i.e.*, a middle person, a mediator, an arbiter, who might be able to lay his hand upon God and upon himself.

Job, by his confession, unconsciously foreshadowed the Christian verity; as by his experience as a righteous and innocent sufferer—emptied of His glory, tried, deserted, shamed, for a moment bereft of a sense of God's presence, yet finally rewarded with glory and honour—he foreshadowed Christ Himself.

How does the passage bear on the idea of an after-life? Job seems to unsay here what in other parts of the poem he affirmed as to the continued life of man. In one place he complains that

“Even for a tree some hope is
That if hewn down 'twill yet sprout upward ; . . .
But man must die, and be laid prostrate,—
Give up the ghost,—and where then is he? . . .
Until the heavens exist no longer
He may not wake, nor be awakened.”

Immediately after this, however, as if there *might be* hope, he expresses a wish that God would hide him in the underworld for a time, so that perhaps his Maker might then be able to incline more favourably to His handiwork. Yet even there he interjects the hesitating thought—“If man may die, and yet be living.”

It is in his moments of greatest anguish and sense of utter desertion that rays of hope are poured into his soul. Thus in xvi. 19, 20, after a paroxysm of grief, in which he describes how God has scattered all his household, shattered his life, and turned friends into foes, he seems, after a pause, to *forget* that God is against him, and exclaims :

“Yet have I still in heaven my Witness :
On high is One that voucheth for me ;
And since my friends become my scorers,
Now unto God mine eyes turn weeping.”

Now it is just in the same manner that in the 19th chapter we have his most sublime confession of faith. It is after recounting how his most intimate friends, wife, children, servants, all have turned against him, and after beseeching his three “comforters” to pity him and not press him hardly “as God doth,” that he

bursts out with that sublime confession. He is made to see light when the darkness is deepest ; to find hope and assurance when the despair is extreme. Man's extremity of anguish is often the moment of clearest vision or intuition of the supernatural. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." "For I have *redeemed* thee" (Isa. xliii. 2). Job's eyes fail with longing for that time when he shall "see God" for himself.

Are we to understand that this sight of God is that which he confessed in the climax in the 42nd chapter—"I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee"? Or was it one which he expected after his death? Much has been written in support of the former view; but the very language used throughout the passage—the mention of the *grave* or *dust* on which the Deliverer *in after times* was to stand, and of the *destruction of the body*—compels one to the conclusion that the latter view is the correct one. The arguments which Dr. Davidson adduces for it in the exhaustive Appendix to his book seem unanswerable. I believe that we have in this passage the belief in immortality (*as understood by the Hebrews*), wrung from the lips of Job after a moment of bitter anguish, in expectation of death, and in spite of all he had said to the contrary.

AUTHENTICITY OF THE BOOK

THERE are some questions which people are continually asking. Was Job a real person? Is the book historical; and who wrote it, and when?

It may be taken as certain that there did exist such a person as Job; that he lived a long while before the book was written about him; that his home was somewhere to the east of the Jordan valley; that he was a man renowned for his wealth, for his piety, and for some great reversal of fortune and some great bodily affliction. The “atmosphere” of the book takes us to patriarchal times. There would be a legend about Job, known to all, long before the book about him was written. Ezekiel (xiv. 14) refers to Job as an actual person; but Ezekiel may only have known of him according to the legend. Part of the legend remains, as it would seem, in the Prologue and the Epilogue, which are in prose. More of it may well have consisted in the sort of “comfort” the three friends attempted to bring him; and it would seem as if this middle portion had been taken up by some poetical writer and enlarged into the discussion as we have it.

This writer appears to have lived at a period when some influx of foreign thought had modified Jewish theology, when questions on the philosophy of life began to engage the Hebrew people, and when the

Wisdom-literature (of which we have examples in the Book of Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes) came into being. He has embodied in his book the floating ideas of his time. The fine discourse on Wisdom which forms our 28th chapter is abrupt, and has little or nothing to do with the subject in hand. It looks like a separate contribution to religious philosophy, written at another time, and, being too brief for publication by itself, given a place here, as a sort of interlude. We need not grudge its inclusion.

Who the writer was can never be known. Like most of the authors of books given a place in the Sacred Canon, he preferred to remain anonymous. The question of his date is much debated ; but generally he is thought to have written about the time of the Babylonian captivity,—the time referred to above as the period of admixture of foreign thought. More than this need not be said here. As Bishop Gibson remarks : “ Happily the interest and value of the book are absolutely independent of all questions of date and authorship. Such questions have an interest that is almost purely literary ” (*Book of Job*, in “ Westminster Commentaries ”).

WAS THE BOOK INTENDED TO BE REGARDED AS A DRAMA?

PROFESSOR DRIVER thinks that its structure is of that nature, and that it may be termed a *dramatic poem*. Dr. Davidson's view is nearly the same: it may justly be called dramatic, though hardly a drama. Bishop Lowth, in his *De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum*, devotes a whole Lecture to the point, and decides against its being so named, on the ground that there is a total absence of Action and Imitation.¹ Yet he grants that it may still be represented as being so far dramatic, as the parties are introduced speaking with great fidelity of character, and as it deviates from strict historical accuracy for the sake of effect.

Prologue and Epilogue, of course, suggest the idea of drama. The Prologue, which is also the first scene, brings on the stage with great boldness and freedom, like one of the old English mystery plays, three persons,—God, and a good man, and Satan;²—the powers of good and evil, and a man with a free will,

¹ With almost as little justice it might be said that the Song of Solomon cannot be termed drama, though it is now almost universally held to be such, and can only be interpreted by supposing different speakers—Solomon, his court ladies, the abducted Shulammite, and her shepherd-lover.

² The Satan he is called in the Hebrew, that one among the angels or “Sons of God” whose part in the celestial conclave was to act as the accuser or opponent.

hitherto choosing the good, and entirely upright. Will he serve God—will he be stedfast under trial and loss? The adversary is permitted to try him, only not touching his life.

After this first scene everything that is supernatural disappears. Satan is no longer there, or thought of. God is withdrawn. The man only remains, reflecting, complaining (unlike his attitude at first). Three friends alternatively aggravate his complaints. His case is discussed by all four, in *three* rounds of speeches, as if in three Acts. The chapter on “Where is Wisdom Found?” might, as before remarked, be regarded as an *Interlude*. A fifth speaker comes on with fresh arguments,—one who claims to be inspired with wisdom and understanding; and he monopolises one scene. Then the Almighty re-appears; convinces Job and condemns the friends; and there is a happy ending, in which Job emerges as gold from the fire, and is re-instated into more than his former prosperity.

But besides these general marks of drama there are others. If drama needs action as well as dialogue, we have this understood throughout. We find passages which can be rightly interpreted only by supposing action. Among these may be cited vi. 28, 29, where we must conceive the friends to be turning away from Job in anger; vii. 15, xix. 26, where he points to his body; xv. 12, where he is transported by his feelings and his eyes gleam with passion.¹ There are also *asides*; e.g., xxi. 16 and xxii. 18 (2nd lines), xxxi. 6, xxxii. 15 (to the friends). And there are instances of excitement in speaking, hesitation, and broken utterances (which, if

¹ Renan says we must here suppose some by-play on the part of Job, irritated now by the hypocrisy of Eliphaz's speech.

not so regarded, defy translation), e.g., vii. 16, xiv. 14, xl. 5, xlji. 4. Job's sudden appeals to God, moreover, in the very midst of replies to the friends, are introduced dramatically, as in vii. 8, 12-22, xiii. 20, xvi. 7, 8, xvii. 3, 4, and xxx. 20. In view of all these circumstances, the book may not, in my opinion, be unfitly termed the Passion Play of the Old Testament.¹

¹ At the very time of writing the above (March 1911) a report was published, stating that a version of Job had just been used on the stage at Norwich, in which twenty performers took part.

ITS PLACE AND FUNCTION IN THE SACRED CANON

A N interpretation of the book, now becoming prevalent, is that, behind the personal experiences of Job, there is a hidden reference to the trials of Israel. Job stands for the nation. Dr. King (*op. cit.* p. 81) says: "The problem which the writer had to solve was exactly that of the prophet Habakkuk—Why should Israel, righteous by comparison, be of all nations the Suffering Nation?" The generally accepted date of its composition—the Captivity—lends some support to this view. The sufferer is in this way idealised. Another idealisation is that of the Righteous Servant in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. This interpretation need not, on the one hand, be in opposition to any other view generally taken of the Book of Job; nor, on the other hand, does it necessarily oppose any Messianic idea. Our Lord has bidden us see in the older Scriptures testimony to Him. On the day of His Resurrection He "interpreted" to certain disciples "in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself, beginning from Moses and the prophets." If in these interpretations He referred to Job, how would He do so? Doubtless as a type of Himself, the Sinless Sufferer.

In Ottley's Bampton Lectures (1897)—*Aspects of the Old Testament*—there is a noteworthy quotation from

Dr. Mozley on the special importance of this book to the *Jew*, if he was ever to accept a Messiah who should suffer before He triumphed: "It was necessary that he should somewhere be taught that virtue was not always rewarded here, and that therefore no argument could be drawn from affliction and ignominy against the person who suffered it." The Cross did become an offence and a stumbling-block to the Jew; but Job and Jeremiah and the Suffering Servant in Isaiah should have prepared them for it.

As for ourselves, who think of the problem of suffering and its inadequate solution in this book, our view has been cleared for ever by the vision of One Who, as Man, was made perfect through suffering,—One Whom, as He Himself declared, "*it behoved* to suffer,"—One Who, though absolutely sinless, and not partially as Job, was nevertheless tried to the uttermost. As we read, another Figure glides into the place of Job. And also, and lastly, in a sense far fuller and far better defined than is found in this book, we are reminded that *our* Redeemer liveth,—the Redeemer from guilt, the Sympathiser with suffering, the Daysman or Arbiter that is able to lay His hand on God and man, since He is both,—the Liberator also from death and the grave.

THE PROLOGUE

THERE was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless¹ and upright, and feared God and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. And his possessions were seven thousand sheep and three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred she-asses, besides a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men² of the East.

Now his sons used to go and hold a feast in each other's houses, in turn;³ and to send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. And so it was that, when the days of their feasting were gone about,⁴ Job sent (for) them and sanctified them, rising early in the morning; and he offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all; for, said Job, It may be my sons have sinned

¹ The word has a positive meaning, *perfect* or *complete*; but, since Job is found using it of himself and others in ix. 20, 21, 22, and would hardly say, "I am perfect," but rather "blameless," this word seems fittest here as there.

² Lit., *the sons of the East*, a general designation for the tribes east of the Jordan.

³ Lit., *on his day*.

⁴ i.e., when one week's round of feasting was ended. This seems to point to the first day of the week, or perhaps, rather, the seventh, as the day of the early morning worship, there being seven sons.

and in their hearts have disowned God. And this Job did continually.¹

Now there was a day when the sons of God² 6 came to present themselves before Jehovah; and Satan³ came also among them. Then Jehovah said 7 unto Satan, Whence comest thou? And Satan answered Jehovah, saying, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And Jehovah said unto Satan, Hast thou observed 8 My servant Job, how there is none like him on the earth, a man blameless and upright, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? Then Satan made 9 answer to Jehovah, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not Thou made a hedge about 10 him, and about his house, and about all that he hath, on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions are increased in the land. Yet do Thou only put forth Thy hand, and 11 touch all that he hath; then (see) if he will not disown Thee to Thy face. And Jehovah said unto 12 Satan, Behold, all that he hath (is) in thy power. Only upon himself put not forth thy hand. So 13 Satan went forth from the presence of Jehovah.

And it came to pass on a day when his sons and 13 daughters were eating, and drinking wine at their eldest brother's house, that there came a messenger 14 unto Job, saying, The oxen were ploughing, and the asses grazing beside them, and the Sabeans fell 15 upon them and took them; and they have slain the young men with the edge of the sword, and I am escaped by myself, I only, to bring thee the tidings.

¹ Lit., *all the days.* ² Sons of the Elohim, i.e., the Angels.

³ The Satan, i.e., the Adversary or Accusing Angel.

Whilst this one was yet speaking, there came 16 another, saying, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burnt up all the sheep, and the young men, and hath consumed them ; and I am escaped by myself, I only, to bring thee the tidings. While this one was yet speaking, there came 17 another who said, The Chaldeans, arranging themselves into three companies, have made a raid on the camels, and have taken them ; and the young men they have slain with the edge of the sword ; and I am escaped by myself, I only, to bring thee the tidings. While he was still speaking, yet came 18 another, saying, Thy sons and daughters were eating, and drinking wine, in their eldest brother's house ; and, behold, a great wind came from over 19 the desert, and smote the four corners of the house ; and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead ; and I am escaped by myself, I alone, to bring thee the tidings.

Then Job arose, and rent his tunic, and shaved 20 his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped. And he said, Naked came I forth from 21 my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither.¹ Jehovah gave, and Jehovah hath taken away ; blessed be Jehovah's name.—In all this Job sinned 22 not, nor attributed unwisdom to God.

Again there was a day when the sons of God 2 came to present themselves before Jehovah ; and Satan came also among them to present himself before Jehovah. And Jehovah said unto Satan, 2 Whence comest thou ? And Satan answered Je-

¹ i.e., to the earth, “the all-mother” (Ecclus. xl. 1).

hovah, saying, From going to and fro in the earth,
and from walking up and down in it. And Jehovah 3
said unto Satan, Hast thou observed My servant
Job, how that there is none like him on the earth,
a man blameless and upright, one that feareth God
and escheweth evil; and how he is still holding fast
to his integrity, and thou hast moved Me against
him to consume him, to no purpose?¹ And Satan 4
answered Jehovah, saying, Skin for skin, yea, all
that a man hath, will he give for his life. But do 5
Thou only put forth Thy hand, and touch his
bone and his flesh, and (see) if he will not disown
Thee to Thy face. And Jehovah said unto 6
Satan, Behold, he is in thy hand; only spare his
life.

So Satan went forth from the presence of Jehovah. 7
And he smote Job with a grievous burning disease²
from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And (Job) 8
took to him a potsherd to scrape himself withal;
and he sat among the ashes. Then said his wife 9
unto him, Art thou still holding firmly to thine
integrity? Disown God, and die. But he said, 10
Thou speakest like as one of the senseless women
would speak. What? Shall we receive good from
God, and shall we not receive evil?—In all this did
not Job sin with his lips.

Now when Job's three friends heard of all this 11
evil that was come upon him, they came each from
his place,—Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the

¹ R.V., *without cause*; but here evidently *in vain, for nothing*.

² Properly, an inflammation (Fuerst). It is generally thought to have been elephantiasis; but from all the symptoms given here and there in the poem it looks more like small-pox, or the boils and blains from which the Egyptians suffered.

Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite;¹ and they made an appointment together to come to condole with him and to comfort him. But when they ¹² lifted up their eyes afar off, and recognised him not, they lifted up their voices and wept; and they rent every one his tunic, and scattered dust upon their heads toward heaven. And they sat down with ¹³ him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him; for they saw that his suffering was very great.

After this, Job opened his mouth, and cursed his day. 3

And Job answered and said:— 2

Oh that the day had seen perdition,
That waited² for my birth,—that night, too,
Which said, “There is conceived a man-child.” 3

Would that that day had turned to darkness! 4

That God on high had not required it;
Nor ever light had dawned upon it;
That darkness and the Shades³ had claimed it; 5
That some thick cloud had brooded o'er it,

¹ Teman was a clan of Edom, settled, it would seem, not far from Petra. As a district Teman was evidently noted for its wisdom (Bar. iii. 22, 23). Shuaḥ was a son of Abraham by Keturah; he and his descendants were settled on the east of the Jordan. Of Naamah nothing is known, if it be not the place mentioned in Joshua xv. 41. None of the three would come from far.

² Literally, (*on which*) *I was to be born*. A.V. and R.V. render, “Let the day perish wherein I was born,” an impossible wish, rather than an imprecation upon a fact of the past.

³ *Tsalmaveth*, deep gloom, a word frequently occurring in the poem, and generally connected with death, as it is in its etymology,—or with Sheol, the underground abode of the dead.

And all that wrappeth day with blackness
Had filled it with alarm and horror !

That night—oh would it had been folded 6
In pitchiest gloom, and not been counted¹
As portion of the yearly cycle,
Nor reckoned in the months that make it.
Oh would that barren had that night been ; 7
That ne'er had sound of joy approached it ;
That they who skill to rouse the Dragon² 8
And blight the day, that night had blighted !
That dimmed had been its stars at twilight, 9
And ne'er had come the light expected,
Nor e'er a glimmer of its dawning ;³
Since of my (mother's) womb the portals 10
It shut not up, and from my vision
Hid not unhappiness.

Why was it 11

I died not from the womb,—expired not
Ev'n as I issued from the matrice ?
Why did (a father's) knees receive me, 12
A mother's breasts provide me nurture ?
For, else, I had this hour been lying 13
In peaceful sleep,—had been reposing
With earth's great counsellors and monarchs 14
Who for their (rest) raised desert towers,⁴
Or with those gold-enriched ones—princes 15
Who filled their palaces with silver ;—

¹ For *joined unto*. See margin of R.V.

² *Leviathan*. Here probably the mythological dragon of the skies, which was supposed to devour the sun and moon in eclipses ; *not* the leviathan of chapter xli.

³ More strictly, that it had not seen the eyelids (or eyelashes) of the dawn. See the same expression, with note thereon, in xli. 18.

⁴ Some think these refer to the Egyptian pyramids.

Or, rather, had not *been*,—but hidden 16
 Down in some grave like those abortions,
 Those babes whose eyes ne'er saw the sunlight.
 There do the wicked cease from troubling,¹ 17
 And there doth rest await the weary.

There side by side repose the captives, 18
 Who hear the tasker's voice no longer;
 There great and small are (all united),
 And every slave hath found his freedom.² 19

Oh why is light given to the wretched, 20
 And life unto the soul-embittered,—
 Who long for death, and still it comes not, 21
 Who search for it, as ne'er for treasure,
 Who are cheerful, even to exultation, 22
 Yea joyous, when the grave is nearing:—
 Why given to him whose way is hidden, 23
 Whom God hath hedged about securely?

My sighings haunt my very table,³ 24
 My groans break forth like rush of water.
 The fear I fear straight falleth on me; 25
 The thing I dread doth aye befall me.
 I have no rest, no ease, no quiet: 26
 Still cometh turmoil.

Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said:— 4

Pray, would it irk thee, were a word 2
 attempted?

Yet—to refrain from speech—who should be able?

¹ Or, *agitating, turmoil*; R.V. margin, *raging*. The same word occurs in verse 26.

² Lit., *and the slave is free from his lord*.

³ Lit., *my sighing cometh before my food,—before*, here in the unusual sense, perhaps, of *like*, as parallel to the next line; but I think the above rendering covers any meaning attached to the word.

See, thou art one who hast instructed many, 3
 Thou hast made strong the feeble hands of others ;
 Thy words have him upholding that was falling, 4
 Yea, thou hast braced the bending knees of
 others ;
 But now 'tis come to thee, and ill thou tak'st it, 5
 It toucheth thine own self, and thou art daunted.

Was not thy trust thy reverent demeanour? 6
 Was not thy hope the blameless course thou
 tookst?
 Bethink thee now, what man e'er perished, guilt- 7
 less?
 Or where have lives of upright men been
 shortened?
 As I have seen, 'tis he that ploweth evil,— 8
 They that sow mischief,—have it as their harvest.
 A breath from God blows on them and they 9
 perish;
 His angered Spirit breathes and they are
 withered:
 The lion's roar is hushed,— his voice of 10
 thunder;—
 The fangs of the ferocious¹ one are broken ;
 For lack of prey the roving¹ beast succumbeth ; 11
 So is dispersed the lioness's litter.
 To me came secretly a revelation : 12
 Upon mine ear it fell in a soft whisper,
 While I was musing, after some dream-vision, 13
 At night, when deep sleep falleth upon mortals.

¹ Different names for lions are given in the Hebrew, in these four lines, representing different traits in the animal,—here, of course, metaphors for the violence and rapacity of unscrupulous men.

A fear there crept upon me, yea, a terror, 14
 That caused a trembling over all my body.
 Athwart my face there glided then a spirit;— 15
 The hair upon my flesh stood up!—It halted;
 Yet could I not discern the fashion of it. 16
 Before my eyes the spectre stood in silence,
 And then I heard a voice:
 “Shall mortal man in God’s esteem be 17
 righteous?
 “Shall man indeed be pure before his Maker?
 “Lo, He relieth not on His own attendants; 18
 “He findeth fault with those who do His
 errands.
 “What, then, of those who sojourn in clay 19
 dwellings,
 “Dwellings that out of dust have their up-
 building,
 “And are more quickly crushed than is a moth
 crushed.
 “From morn till eve they battered are and 20
 broken,
 “For ever perishing all-unregarded.
 “Is not their tent-cord¹ torn away within them? 21
 “Do they not die, or e’er they gather wisdom?”

Call now; is any who thy call will answer? 5
 To which of the Holy Ones² wilt thou betake
 thee?
 Nay now, impatience doth but kill the foolish, 2
 And passion vexeth unto death the thoughtless.

¹ A common expression for death among people dwelling in tents. The body is the tent; the soul the cord which sustains it (Renan).

² Angels.

The foolish I myself have seen firm-rooting, 3
 But soon have come to call his house accursed.
 Far fare his children from (the paths of) safety, 4
 Down-trodden in the gate,¹ with none to rescue.
 The harvest of whose fields the hungry eateth, 5
 Who take it from the very thorns² (that shield it);
 Yea, widely doth the snare gape for their sub-
 stance.

Misfortune, sooth, no product of the soil is; 6
 Not from the earth unhappiness upspringeth;
 Nay, rather is man born to be unhappy, 7
 As on the wing the sons of flame³ mount up-
 ward.

Now, were I thou, to God I would betake me, 8
 Yea, to the Deity⁴ commit my quarrel;⁵
 Who great things doeth, things we may not 9
 fathom,
 Things marvellous, beyond our power to number.

¹ Gate where justice is administered. See note on xxix. 7.

² “The farmers, after they have threshed out the grain, frequently lay it aside . . . near the floor, and cover it up with thorn bushes to keep it from being carried away or eaten by animals” (Thomson, *The Land and the Book*).

³ R.V. (margin): “*the sons of flame or of lightning.*”

Septuagint: “Even so the vulture’s young seek the high places.”

Vulgate: (simply), “and the bird is born for flying.”

Renan: “Comme le fils de la foudre pour s’élèver en l’air,”
 explaining “fils de la foudre” as “the bird of prey.”

Davidson assumes the received translation—“as the sparks fly upward”—as correct, and explains the whole verse as meaning that it is the nature of man to bring trouble upon himself as naturally as sparks fly out of flame.

⁴ Elohim. The former word, *Eloah*, is in this book the usual name for God, with *Shaddai* (the Almighty) as alternative.

⁵ My cause.

Who o'er the face of earth His rain bestoweth, 10
 And sendeth forth His waters on the pastures ;
 Who putteth humble men in lofty places, 11
 And the bowed down doth set erect in freedom.
 Devices of the crafty He frustrateth, 12
 Thus may their hand no cunningfeat¹ accom-
 plish.

The wise in their own craftiness He taketh,² 13
 And quick despatch hath scheming of the cunning.
 Even in the daytime do they meet with dark- 14
 ness,

And as men grope at night, so these at noonday.
 While from the sword—yea, from the mouth—of 15
 tyrants,

From out their grasp,—He rescueth the needy.
 Thus hope ariseth for the poor and helpless ; 16
 And Wickedness, with lips compressed, is silent.

Lo, happy is the man whom God reproveth : 17
 Refuse not, then, the chastening of the Almighty.
 For He it is that woundeth, and up-bindeth : 18
 The blow He bringeth, and His own hands heal it.
 In six adversities He would preserve thee,— 19
 Yea, in the seventh there should no evil touch
 thee,—

Delivering thee from death in time of famine, 20
 And from the menace of the sword in wartime.
 From scourge of tongues then thou shouldst be 21
 protected ;

Nor should calamity's approach alarm thee :

¹ *Cunning feat* ; one word in the Hebrew, תְּשִׁיחָה *tushiyah*, meaning generally skill or wit, but not always easily translatable. It occurs again in vi. 13 (*remede*), xi. 6 (*mental resources*), xii. 16 (*skill*), and xxvi. 3 (*deep learning*).

² Quoted exactly by S. Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 19.

Calamity thou'dst laugh at, and at hunger. 22
 Nor beast of earth shouldst thou be then afraid of.
 Thou wert in league e'en with thy very field-stones; 23
 Beasts of the wilds were to thy peace made
 friendly;
 And thou shouldst feel thy tent to be in safety, 24
 And look around thy homestead, nothing missing.
 Yea, thou shouldst see great plenty from thy 25
 sowing,
 And as the grass upon the ground thine offspring.
 Robust and ripe to the grave thou shouldst be 26
 gathered,¹
 A sheaf gone² to the corn-floor in its season.

Lo, this is so; thus have we searched and 27
 found it:
 Do thou now hear, and for thyself discern it.

Then Job answered, saying:— 6
 Oh were but weighed, now, my “impatience”;³ 2
 My hurt, too, laid in the scale against it!
 For now the sea-sands should be lighter. 3
 Wild words I spoke—behold the reason :
 The arrows of the Almighty pierce me, 4
 Whereof my soul the poison drinketh:
 God's terrors are arrayed against me.
 Brays the wild ass amid the verdure? 5
 Or lows the ox amid his fodder?
 Do men eat tasteless food unsalted? 6
 Is flavour in the juice of mallows?
 Ah! what my soul refused the touch of 7

¹ Lit., *wouldst come*.

² Lit., *gone up* to.

³ The word used by Eliphaz in v. 2.

Is now become my loathsome diet. 8
 Oh would that my request were granted ;
 That God would give me that I long for :
 That it might please Him even to crush me, 9
 Let go His hand, and cut my life-thread ;
 That I might have at least the comfort, 10
 The joy amid my pain incessant,
 That never have I disregarded
 What He, the Holy One, hath spoken.

What is my strength, that I should linger ? 11
 My end, that life to me were lengthened ?
 My strength,—is it the strength a stone hath ? 12
 My flesh,—is it composed of iron ?¹
 Nay, is not every help denied me, 13
 And all remedē shut up against me ?
 Due to the desperate were some kindness 14
 From one's own friend, ay, though behind him
 He cast the fear of the Almighty.
 My brethren fail,² as fails the wady ; 15
 They change, as change the wady's currents,—
 Those streams ice-darkened once and turbid, 16
 Wherein the snow its whiteness hideth ;
 Which yet in time of drought are minished, 17
 And in the heat dry up and vanish ;
 The channels of whose course are shifted, 18
 Till o'er the waste they pass and perish.
 There stare the caravans of Tema, 19
 There wait the merchant troops of Sheba,
 Abashed upon their disappointment,³ 20
 Come thither but to their confusion.

¹ Properly, brass or bronze. ² Lit., *act deceitfully*.

³ Lit., *because they relied* (upon finding them).

So now are ye become—as nothing ; 21
 Ye see what shocketh, and are daunted.
 Is it that I have asked your bounty ? 22
 Or of your wealth some bribe, to free me,
 Deliverance from some adversary, 23
 Or ransom from the hand of tyrants ?
 Tell me—and I will hear in silence— 24
 Make clear to me the thing I erred in.
 What weight is in the words of justice ! 25
 What charge, then, is it ye are urging ?
 Think ye to censure words one utters 26
 When to the winds he speaks despairing ?
 Oh, ye would gamble o'er the orphan, 27
 And your own friend would treat as barter !
 —Nay, now, be pleased to look towards me ; 28
 Should I speak falsely to your faces ?
 Come back,¹—let there be no injustice ; 29
 Come back, I say,—my cause is righteous.²
 Is on my tongue no sense of justice ? 30
 Of things that hurt have I no feeling ?³

Is not man's life on earth a warfare ?⁴ 7
 Are not his days those of an hireling ?
 As craves the slave the shades of evening,
 As looks the hireling for his wages,
 So I on hopeless months am fallen,
 And weary nights become my portion.
 When I lie down, quoth I, “What moment
 Shall I arise ?” but night He lengthens,

¹ It would seem as if the three friends were not only averting their faces, but going away, on hearing this passionate language.

² Lit., *my right* (or righteousness) *is in it*.

³ Lit., *palate*. Is not my palate cognisant of hurtful things ?

⁴ Strictly, the term for which a soldier is hired.

Till ere the dawn I tire with tossings.
 My flesh is clothed with worms and dust-clods ; 5
 My skin-sores healing and then flowing.
 My days fly swifter than the shuttle,
 And, reft of hope, the end are nearing.
 Think : a mere breath is my existence : 7
 No more these eyes shall look on pleasure ;
 No more the eye that now beholds me,
 Shall light on me ; when Thine¹ towards me
 Shall turn, will I no more be living.
 Like the spent cloud, so he who goeth 9
 Down unto Sheol,² no more ascendeth :
 No more unto his home returneth ;
 No more his native place shall know him.
 So, too, will *I*³ my lips refrain not : 11
 Speak *I* will, from an anguished spirit ;
 Wail making, from a soul embittered.
 Am I a sea, or some sea-monster, 12
 That Thou must set a watch upon me ?
 My bed, quoth I, might bring me comfort,
 My couch calm down my lamentation,
 But there with dreams dost Thou alarm me,
 And terrify my soul with visions.
 And I would sooner suffer strangling,
 Would sooner death, than mine affliction.⁴ 15

¹ God's.

² The designation of the unseen underworld, corresponding nearly to the Greek Hades. Often in A.V. translated "the grave"; e.g., Gen. xxxvii. 35; or, misleadingly, "hell," e.g., Ps. ix. 17.

³ As with Eliphaz, iv. 2. The "I" is emphatic.

⁴ The text has "my bones." But by a slight change (ו to ז) in the noun, suggested by Professor Driver, we have a more probable reading, and one that falls in with xxxvi. 21, where Elihu charges Job with preferring death to his affliction.

I loathe . . . I shall not live for ever. . . . 16
 Leave me alone, a breath my days are.

Ah, what is man, that Thou shouldst honour— 17
 That Thou shouldst set Thine heart upon him,
 And pay him morn by morn Thy visits, 18
 Nay, try and prove him every moment?
 How long wilt Thou not cease to watch me, 19
 Leaving me never for an instant?¹
 If I have sinned, what shall I offer,² 20
 O Watcher of Mankind, before Thee?
 Why hast Thou set me for Thy target?
 Why made me to myself a burden?
 And why not pardon my transgression, 21
 And put away the evil in me?
 For soon in dust shall I be sleeping,
 And Thou shalt seek me, when I am not.

Then Bildad the Shuhite answered and said :—

How long art thou to talk in this wise? 2
 A very storm of wind thy words are!
 Shall God miscarry, then, in judgment? 3
 Shall the Almighty fail in justice?
 What if thy sons have sinned against Him, 4
 And to their sin He hath consigned them!
 If thou, thyself, to God wilt hie thee, 5
 And make thy prayer to the Almighty;
 If thou wilt pure become, and upright; 6
 Be sure He will awake to help thee,
 And make thy righteous home to prosper;

¹ Lit., while I swallow down my spittle,—common phrase for a moment.

² ὥψ (pa'al), like ποιεῖν, has often this sense of *offering* in connection with sacrifice. “Doing” an oblation is *offering* it.

Then, though but small were thy beginnings,	7
Thine end shall have exceeding increase.	
Inquire now of some generation	8
Of yore, and make thyself acquainted	
With the researches of their fathers.	
—Of yesterday are <i>we</i> , and know not,	9
Our days on earth being but a shadow.—	
Will <i>they</i> not speak to thine instruction,	10
Their sure ¹ convictions thus declaring:—	
“Springeth papyrus where no mire is?	11
“Shooteth the reed-grass where no water?	
“The which, yet green and yet ungathered,	12
“Before all other grass is withered.	
“So fareth every God-forgetter;	13
“So fade the hopes of the ungodly.	
“Worthless as dross that man’s assurance;	14
“A spider’s web ² is his reliance.	
“Lean he upon his house, ’twill stand not;	15
“Cling he thereto, it hath no firmness.	
“Luxuriant (plant) is he in sunshine,	16
“With tendrils roving o’er his garden,	
“With roots entwined about his earth-mound,	17
“And piercing through the stony subsoil;	
“Yet surely thence shall (God) destroy him,	18
“His place protest, ‘I have not seen thee.’	
“See there the joy ³ his way doth lead to!	19
“And from the soil are others springing.” ⁴	
No; God doth <i>not</i> cast off the upright;	20
Neither upholdeth evil-doers.	
Still might He fill thy mouth with laughter,	21

¹ From their heart,—heart-sure.

² Lit., *house*, as in the next line.

³ Ironical.

⁴ Others occupy his place.

Thy lips with joyance.

22

They that hate thee
May yet be clothed with shame. But (surely)
The tent of wickedness shall perish.

And Job answered, saying:—

9

Surely I know that these things *are* so !
But—how shall man with God be righted?¹ 2
What if one chose to argue with Him ! 3
—A thousandth part he could not answer.
Of mind so wise, in power so mighty, 4
What man e'er braved Him and succeeded ?
Who removeth mountains on the instant,² 5
O'erturning them in His displeasure ;
Who shaketh earth from her foundation, 6
Making her pillars quake and tremble ;—
One, at Whose word the sun would rise not ; 7
Who sealeth up the stars in darkness ;
Who spreadeth out alone the heavens, 8
And treadeth on the crests of ocean ;
Who made Arcturus³ and Orion, 9
The Chambers of the South,⁴ the Pleiads ;
Whose mighty works no man may fathom, 10
Whose marvels pass our power to number.

Cross He my path, I may not see Him ; 11
Nor yet perceive, though He pass onward.

¹ Or, be justified. Cf. xl. 8, where the same form of the verb occurs. "With" in this line means *against, confronting*.

² Lit., *and ere they know it, or, and they know it not.*

³ אַשׁ ('Ash), slightly different from אַיִשׁ ('Ayish) in xxxviii. 32, and may or may not be the same.

⁴ A large and imposing group of stars at that time visible above the southern horizon in Palestine (Schiaparelli's *Astronomy in the Old Testament*), containing at least five stars of the first magnitude.

Let Him lay hold, and who shall stay Him, 12
 Or say to Him, "What wouldest Thou¹ (with me)?"
 Nay, God will not withdraw His anger : 13
 Rahab's abettors crouched beneath Him.²
 What then were I, to give rejoinder, 14
 Or to make proof of words against Him ?
 Though just my cause, I could not answer, 15
 Could but implore my Judge's mercy.
 Were I to challenge, He to answer, 16
 Scarce could I deem that He would hear me.
 Well might He vex me by some tempest, 17
 And multiply for nought my bruises ;
 My very breath He might deny me, 18
 And fill my cup with bitternesses.
 If 'tis a question of the strongest, 19
 "I am here" (saith He); or, if of judgment,
 "Who citeth Me—to what tribunal?"³
 Though just my cause, my mouth would soil me ; 20
 Though blameless, He would prove me crooked.
 I should not know myself as blameless : 21
 Should look upon my life with loathing.

One is the issue ; therefore say I, 22
 Blameless and wicked He destroyeth.
 Come there a scourge, death-dealing, sudden, 23
 The innocent's despair He mocketh.
 Earth is to evil hands committed ;
 And He hath veiled its Judges' faces ; 24

¹ Lit., *what doest Thou?*

² An allusion to some mythical story. Rahab seems to have been the name of some dragon or other monster, under which the raging of the sea was personified (cf. xxvi. 12). Elsewhere the term is applied to Egypt.

³ Strictly, *Who shall arrange for My arraignment?*

Or if not He, who else hath done it?

My days outstrip the speed of runners; 25
 They flee away, they find no pleasure,—
 Skim past like skiffs of light papyrus, 26
 Like eagles swooping on their quarry.
 Were I to say, “Avaunt complaining, 27
 Away sad looks, let me be cheerful,”
 I shudder yet at all my troubles; 28
 I know Thou wilt not hold me blameless;
 I am to be accounted guilty; 29
 Why therefore be at pains for nothing?
 Were I to bathe me in snow-water, 30
 And cleanse my hands with ash of sea-weed,¹
 Yet wouldst Thou plunge me in the slime-pit; 31
 And mine own garments would abhor me.

For He is not a man, as I am, 32
 To be answered, or be met in judgment;
 Nor arbiter is there between us, 33
 To lay his hand on one and other.
 Let Him remove His rod from off me, 34
 Let not His awfulness appal me,
 Then would I speak, nor quail before Him;— 35
 For so I do not in my conscience.

My soul revolteth at my being! 10
 I will give vent to my complaining;
 Will speak in bitterness of spirit;
 Will say to God, Do not condemn me;² 2
 Shew me for what Thou strivest with me;
 Doth it advantage Thee to harass, 3
 To treat Thy handiwork as worthless,

¹ Or, with salt of lye, or potash. The word also may signify a cistern for rain-water.

² Or, Deem me not wicked.

And shine on evil-doers' counsels ?	
Are then Thine eyes the eyes of mortals ? ¹	4
Perceivest Thou as man perceiveth ?	
Thy days, are they the days of mortals,	5
Or are Thy years as man's (few) ² days are,	
That Thou shouldst seek out my transgressions,	6
And for my sin make inquisition,—	
The while Thou know'st I am not wicked,	7
And none may from Thine hand deliver ?	
Thy hands have wrought upon and formed	8
me,	
Entirely ; yet dost Thou destroy me !	
Think how as clay Thou once didst mould	9
me ;	
And unto dust wouldst Thou reduce me ?	
Pour'dst Thou not out as milk my substance,	10
Curdling it even as milk is curdled ?	
Thou gavest skin and flesh to clothe me,	11
And bone and sinew for protection ;	
With life, with grace, Thou didst endow me,	12
Thy providence watched o'er my spirit.	
Yet <i>this</i> Thou hidst within Thy bosom,—	13
<i>This</i> , well I trow, remained Thy purpose,—	
That if I erred, then Thou wouldst mark me,	14
And from my sin wouldst not absolve me.	
Woe unto me if I offended !	15
Nor must I raise my head if <i>righteous</i> :	
I, surfeited with ignominy,	
Must look (alone) on my affliction ! ³	
Yea, were my head but once uplifted,	16

¹ Lit., *of flesh*.² i.e., so short that man may outlive and escape Thee.³ Or, *and looking upon my affliction*.

Thou'dst pounce upon me as a lion,
Shewing *yet* in me Thy wondrous¹ power!
Thou wouldst renew Thy proofs² against me; 17
Wouldst heap on me Thine indignation:—
'Gainst me were legion upon legion!
Why didst Thou bring me from the womb, 18
then?
Would I had died ere eye had seen me!
Would I had been as one un-being! 19
Borne off from childbed to the burial.
May not my few brief days have quiet? 20
Leave me;—let me take heart a little,
Before I go whence I return not,— 21
To the land of darkness and of Shadows,
Land of thick gloom, as of the midnight, 22
Land of the Shadows and of Chaos,
Whose brightest hour is as the midnight.

Then Zophar the Naamathite answered and said:— II

Should the stream of words be left un- 2
answered?
Must the glib speaker needs be faultless?
Shall thy proud boasts make others silent? 3
Art thou to scoff, and no man shame thee?
Thou sayest (to God), “Pure is my doctrine,
I am without reproach before Thee.”
But oh that God might be persuaded 4
To speak, to open His lips against thee:
Shewing thee the secret ways of wisdom,
Transcending twice the mind's resources! 5
6

¹ Ironical.

² His plagues, regarded also ironically as proofs of guilt.

Know, too, that God may be exacting¹
Less than thy wickedness deserveth.

Canst thou the deeps of God discover? 7
Or fathom fully the Almighty?
What canst thou with the heights of heaven? 8
How know what lies more deep than Sheol?
Further than earth's expanse it reacheth,
And hath a wider stretch than ocean.
Doth He "pass on,"² doth He abandon,
Or summon forth,—who then may stay Him?
For He it is who vain folk knoweth;
And shall He look at wrong, and heed not?
This way the dullard getteth reason,
Thus are wild asses' colts born human!³ 12

If thou wouldest set thine heart aright, now, 13
And wouldest stretch out thy hands towards Him,
The wrong upon thine hand removing, 14
And harbouring in thy tents no evil,—
Then shouldst thou "raise thy face," unblemished; 15
Thou shouldst be resolute and fearless;
And think no more of hardship suffered 16
Than of a flood which is subsided.
Life would grow brighter than the noonday, 17
Its darkest hour be as the morning!

¹ There are two verbs, *nāṣi*; *nashah*, having exactly opposite meanings. The sentence may be rendered as above; or thus: *God may be remitting* (causing to be forgotten) *to thee some of thy guilt*. But the insinuation is the same either way.

² Taking up Job's word in ix. 11, as in several other places.

³ This is a *crux* for translators. Professor Davidson thinks there is a reference to some proverb, and would like to translate, "But an empty man will become wise when a wild ass colt is born a man."

Thou shouldst feel safe, for Hope were by thee, 18
 Gaze round, and take thy rest in safety,
 Lie down, with nothing to alarm thee. 19
 Yea, great men should entreat thy favour.

But the eyes of wicked men shall fail them; 20
 Nor shall they find a way of refuge,—
 Their only hope their soul's extinction!¹

Then Job answered and said:—

12

Forsooth are ye a (favoured) people;² 2
 And when ye die, then dieth wisdom.
 Yet I, even as yourselves, have reason, 3
 Nor do I fall a whit behind you;
 Nay, who is ignorant of such things?
 Must I be then my friends' derision?— 4
 “The man who challenged God, and answered”!³
 Derision? I, the just, the upright?
 Contempt the meed is of misfortune— 5
 The prosperous easy man so deemeth—
 Ordained for those whose footsteps falter;
 While brigands' tents remain in quiet, 6
 And God-provokers dwell securely,—

¹ Or, *to breathe out their soul, or life*,—to “give up the ghost.”

² Not *the* people: there is no definite article. And some such adjective as “favoured” seems required as a parallelism to the next line. Job has now heard all the three speakers, and finds nothing but misunderstanding and pious platitudes. Hence the bitter sarcasm.

³ I translate the verbs here as in ix. 16 (where both occur together), in their forensic sense. Job had not actually challenged God, but spoke of doing so; and he was to be a laughing-stock for this. Translated in this way, the words express the *reason* for his being treated with derision, and they fall naturally in apposition—“*the God-challenger, the God-answerer!* Usually the words are taken as referring to his former life, when he *called on God, and God heard him.*”

Whom God with His own hand supplieth.	
Nay ; ask the beasts, and they will shew thee ;	7
The fowls of the air, and they will tell thee ;	8
Consult the earth ; be that thy teacher ;	
The sea—its fishes will inform thee :	
Who knoweth not, 'mid all these creatures,	9
That <i>this</i> ¹ Jehovah's hand is doing ;	
Wherein is every creature living,	10
The breath of every man that breatheth. ²	
Must not an ear weigh what is spoken,—	11
Even as its food the palate testeth—	
The wisdom in the hoary-headed,	12
The insight length of days conferreth ?	
With <i>Him</i> is wisdom linked with power,	13
An ordered plan as well as insight.	
Lo, what He razeth is not builded,	14
Whom He imprisoneth hath no loosing ;	
Stay He the flood, it then abateth,	15
Send He it forth, the land is deluged.	
With Him is power, and skill (to use it) ;	16
His tools ³ the erring, the misguiding.	
By Him do senators walk barefoot,	17
And judges act as men bewildered.	
The fetters forged by kings He looseth,	18
Binding on their own loins the waistcloth. ⁴	
Priests doth He make to go forth barefoot ;	19
The long-established He unseateth.	
Lips of the eloquent He closeth ;	20
Judgment He taketh from the aged ;	

¹ This allowance of evil. Cf. verse 6 ; also ix. 22.

² Lit., *of all flesh of man*.

³ Lit., *to Him are the erring*; etc., i.e., they are instruments in His hands.

⁴ Badge of servitude or captivity.

Contempt He poureth upon princes, 21
 And maketh slack the belt of stalwarts;
 Revealeth deep things out of darkness, 22
 Yea, lighteth up the land of Shadows;
 Increaseseth and destroyeth nations, 23
 Enlarging them but to forsake them;
 Depriveth of their understanding 24
 The people's chiefs, so that they wander
 Bewildered in a trackless chaos,—
 Groping through darkness, where no light is, 25
 With step unsteady as the drunkard's.

Look you, all this mine eye hath witnessed,— 13
 Mine ear hath heard, and comprehended.
 Whate'er ye know, that I know likewise; 2
 Nor do I fall one whit behind you.
 Nay, 'tis the *Almighty* I would speak to; 3
 'Tis before *God* I fain would reason.
 You! ye are nought but falsehood-gilders,¹ 4
 All worthless counterfeit physicians.
 Oh, would ye were entirely silent! 5
 That, then, should be your claim to wisdom.
 I beg you, hear my protestation,— 6
 The pleadings of my lips give ear to.

Must ye, on *God's* behalf, speak evil? 7
 Must ye, to please Him, utter falsehood?
 Must ye on His account be partial? 8
 What? ye God's advocates?—I ask you,

¹ Men who *gloss over* what is false. The original meaning of the verb (*tafat*) is to smear over. The same verb occurs in xiv. 17, where to smear or gloss over gives good sense. Dr. Dillon's "patchers of inanities" approaches the correct idea.

Would it be well were He to probe you? 9
 Can ye dupe Him, as ye would others?
 He will reprove you, and that sharply,
 If ye be partial, though ye screen it.
 Should not His majesty deter you? 11
 Some dread of Him alight upon you?
 Your adages¹ are but as ashes;
 Breastworks of clay all your defences.

Hold, let me speak, and be ye silent, 13
 And I, whatever may befall me,
 Will take my flesh in my teeth despite it,² 14
 Will put my life in my hand despite it;—
 Look, He may slay me, wait I will not,
I will maintain my ways before Him. 15
 This, too, shall count to me for safety,— 16
 That no false man may come before Him.
 Hear what I say, hear it, I pray you, 17
 Store in your ears this my averment.
 See, I am ready for my trial; 18
 I know I have the right behind me.
 Ah, were there one who could impeach me, 19
 Then were I mute, then death were welcome.
 Grant me, (O God), but two conditions,³ 20
 So I may shrink not from Thy presence:
 Remove Thy hand now laid upon me; 21
 Nor let Thine awfulness appal me.
 Then if Thou challenge, I will answer; 22
 Or if I speak, make Thou rejoinder.
 What are my sins and my misdoings? 23
 Shew me my error, my transgression.

¹ Traditional maxims (about suffering following upon wrong-doing)—sayings learnt by heart.

² Lit., *on whatever (issue).* ³ Lit., *two things only do not with me.*

- Why is it that Thy face Thou hidest, 24
 And holdest me as hostile to Thee?
 Wouldst Thou pursue a driven leaflet, 25
 Or a dried straw wouldst Thou give chase to?
 For bitter things Thou writ'st against me; 26
 My youthful sins Thou sett'st before me;
 And in the stocks my feet Thou placest, 27
 And keepest watch on all my movements,
 A ring around my feet imprinting;
 And *this*¹—as a rotten thing—must perish; 28
 Or as an old moth-eaten garment.

- 14
- Man born of woman
 Is of few days, and full of trouble;
 Forth-cometh as a flower, and fadeth: 2
 Fleeth as a shadow, unabiding.
 And yet o'er such a one Thou watchest, 3
 And bring'st him with Thee into judgment!
 Ah, could a clean be from an unclean!
 Ne'er one (so born is).
 Yet since his days are predetermined, 5
 And of his months Thou hast the number;—
 Since Thou hast set him limitations
 He may not overstep; avert Thou 6
 Thine eye from him, let him have quiet,
 Till, hireling-like, his day he finish.
 For (even) for a tree some hope is, 7
 That if hewn down 'twill yet sprout upward,
 That shoots therefrom may not be wanting.
 Its root may in the earth grow age-worn, 8
 Its stump may in the mould be dying,
 Yet will it bud at scent of water, 9

¹ As if pointing to his body.

And put forth foliage, like a sapling.	
But man must die, and be laid prostrate,—	10
Give up the ghost;—and where then is he?	
As waters from some lake retreating,	11
Or, as a stream dried up and vanished,	
Man lieth down, and rise he may not.	12
Until the heavens exist no longer	
May he not wake, nor be awakened.	
Oh that in Sheol Thou wouldest but hide me,	13
Hide me till gone be Thy displeasure,	
Set me a time, and not forget me—	
If man may die and yet be living!— ¹	14
Then would I wait my term appointed:	
Wait all the days, until my change came.	
Then <i>I</i> might answer to Thy summons,	15
<i>Thou</i> to Thy handiwork incline Thee.	
For then, ² with all my deeds recorded,	16
No longer watching for my trespass,	
My sin being bound up in a bundle,—	17
Then mightest Thou my guilt gloss over. ³	
But no; as a falling peak must crumble,	18
As a rock will from its place be severed,	
Its fragments worn away by water,	19
And the soft earth washed down by torrents,	
So Thou the hope of man destroyest;	
Aye wear'st him down, till he departeth;	20
Changest his look, then dost dismiss him!	
Be his sons honoured, nought he knoweth;	21
Degraded, nought is he the wiser.	

¹ Lit., *shall he be living?*—but the above seems to be the meaning of the abrupt utterance.

² Rather than “for now”; as in iii. 13 and vi. 3. “Deeds” for steps, movements.

³ See note on xiii. 4.

For *him*, pain waiteth for the body,
And sorrow for the soul within him.

22

Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, saying :— 15

Must then the sage reply with lore inflated,
Swelling his lungs as with the (wild) sirocco ? 2
And must he argue thus with bootless prattle,— 3
With speeches that are all unprofitable ?
Nay, as for thee, thou castest off' religion,
All reverent regard for God belittling. 4
'Tis thine iniquity thy mouth instructeth,
So dost thou choose the language of the crafty. 5
'Tis thine own mouth, not I, that doth condemn
thee ; 6
Yea, thine own lips do testify against thee.
Art thou the first-born, then, of human beings ? 7
Wast thou brought forth before the hills existed ?
Wast thou an auditor in God's assembly,— 8
That to thy person thou dost limit wisdom ?
What dost thou know, whereof we know not 9
also ?
What grasp of mind hast thou, we cannot equal ?
There is among us one—gray-haired and aged ¹— 10
Whose length of days is greater than thy father's.
Too small for thee are God's own consolations ? ² 11
Too weak the words that dealt so gently with
thee ? ³
Why art thou so transported by thy feelings, 12
And wherefore do thine eyes so gleam (with pas-
sion)

¹ Evidently the speaker himself. Perhaps the words are spoken in reference to Job's in xii. 12.

² See iv. 12 seq.

³ v. 8 seq.

That against God thy spirit thou erectest, 13
 That unto Him such speech thou dar'st to utter?

Ah, what is man, that he should be reproach- 14
 less,

The child of woman, that he should be righteous?
 Lo, in His holy ones no trust He putteth, 15
 The very heavens before Him are not spot-
 less;

Much less the creature worthless and polluted, 16
 Man, swallowing iniquity as water!

Now hearken unto me, and let me shew thee; 17
 Let me declare what I myself have witnessed,
 (And) what the wise have taught, without sup- 18
 pression,

The doctrine and tradition of their fathers—
 A race to whose sole use the land was given, 19
 And among whom no stranger intermingled:—

Self-tortured all his days is he—the wicked: 20
 So too through his appointed years the oppressor.
 Upon his ears fall sounds that strike with terror; 21
 His “quiet” is invaded by the spoiler;
 Nor doth he dream he shall escape disaster; ¹ 22
 Believing, rather, that the sword awaits him.
 Hither and thither for his bread he roveth, 23
 Knowing his day of doom is hovering near him.
 Distress and misery make of him a coward; 24
 Assailing him like kings equipped for battle.
 For against God his hand he hath uplifted, 25
 And dared to brave, defiant, the Almighty,

¹ Lit., *darkness*. The whole of this paragraph (which might perhaps be put in inverted commas as the tradition referred to in verse 18) is intended as a contradiction of Job's statement in xii. 6, that “*brigands' tents remain in quiet.*” Such men, Eliphaz avers, do *not* prosper, and are full of presentiments of evil, and reap as they sow.

Rushing upon Him headlong as a warrior	26
Behind the solid bosses of his buckler.	
His countenance was overlaid with fatness,	27
And on his loins great folds of flesh he gathered ;	
And his abode he made in ruined cities,	28
Lurking in uninhabitable houses	
That had been destined ¹ to be heaps of ruins.	
He shall not thrive, nor shall his wealth con-	29
tinue ;	
No longer shall his ripened crops bend earth-	
ward. ²	
From his dark doom there shall be no escaping :	30
A flame of fire shall make his shoots to wither ;	
A breath from God ³ shall blow, and he shall	
perish.	
Let him not trust in vanity, 'twill cheat him ;	31
Nay, vanity shall be his own requital,—	
Full wage of it, and ere his day is over ;	32
He shall be like a palm without its branches ; ⁴	
Or like a vine, its sour fruit not maturing ;	33
Or as the olive casting off its blossom.	
Unfruitful is the household of the godless ;	34
The tents of bribery (God's) fire consumeth ;	
Conceiving mischief, giving birth to trouble,—	35
So their own loins ⁵ prepare (their own) delusion.	

Then Job made answer, saying:—

10

Of such things have I heard abundance;
Ye all be wearisome consolers.

¹ Does this point to Jericho, the ruins of which were infested by robbers, and destined never to be rebuilt?

² That is, be heavy and abundant.

³ Lit., *His mouth.*

⁴ Or, His (palm-)branch (shall be) without greenness

⁵ Lit., *womb*.

Is any end to words so idle?¹ 3
 Or what pricked *thce*,² that thou repliest?

I too could talk as ye:—if only 4
 Your soul were in the stead of *my* soul,
 I could string sentences against you,
 And wag my head at you (as ye do);³
 Could with mere mouthing make you stiffen; 5
 Could quell (your pain) with lip-condolence!

Unquelled *my* pain is, by my converse; 6
 Yet if I ceased, how should it quit me?
 Nay, now it⁴ hath outworn my patience;— 7
 (God), Thou hast scattered all my household,
 And wrought such havoc in my body 8
 That it becometh *testimony*—
 Yea, my emaciate frame upstandeth
 To render evidence against me!

My Foe hath torn me and pursued me,⁵ 9
 Gnashed on me with His teeth, in fury,
 And whetteth yet His eyes upon me.
 (So) with their mouths men gape upon me: 10
 In scorn they smite me on the cheek-bone;
 Gathering upon me all in concert.
 Unto the godless God doth give me, 11
 Thrusting me forth into their clutches.
 I, who at ease was, now am shattered;
 'Twas even (as) by the neck He seized me,

¹ Lit., *words of wind*, or breath.

² To Eliphaz.

³ Job sees that their head-shakings (tokens of compassion) were only feigned.

⁴ Rather than *He*; and it suits the grammar, and continues the thought.

⁵ The image is that of a beast of prey.

And dashed me down ; then for His target
 Upraised me ; that from every quarter 13
 His darts might rain, and cleave asunder
 My reins within me,—without sparing,—
 And pour upon the earth my life-blood.¹

Breach upon breach He breaketh in me, 14
 Rushing upon me like some war-chief.

Over my skin I have sewn sackcloth,
 And in the dust my head² have buried. 15
 My face is flushed and swoln with weeping ; 16
 Upon mine eyelids sit the shadows !

Since in my hands no wrong appeareth,
 And pure hath (ever) been my prayer,
 O Earth, refuse my blood to cover,
 And let my cry rise up unceasing. 17 18

Yet have I still in heaven my Witness : 19
 On high is One that voucheth for me.
 And since my friends become my scorers,
 Now unto God my eyes turn weeping. 20
 'Twixt man and God let Him determine,
 As 'twixt one mortal and his neighbour ;³ 21
 Ere⁴ I, my term of years accomplished,
 That journey take whence I return not. 22

¹ Lit., *gall*, the Oriental equivalent for life-blood. In verse 18 the actual word “blood” is used.

² Lit., *horn*.

³ The Hebrew words are indefinite. Taken literally they are, *Both let Him (or, He shall) determine for a man against (or, with) God, and a son of man for (or, in respect to) his neighbour*. Dr. E. G. King translates tersely, “For a pleader for man with God, a man for his fellow !”

⁴ Or, *that so . . . I may go*.

My breath is spent, my days are ending ; 17
 For me (now welcome were) the graveyard,
 Except¹ that mockers yet beset me, 2
 And that I still meet provocation.²

Give Thou a pledge (O God), I pray Thee ; 3
 Be Thou unto Thyself my surety.

Whose hand (but Thine), in mine, could pledge
 me ?

For Thou the heart of these hast blinded : 4
 Let them not therefore have their triumph.

“Denounce a friend for what his fate is,
 Ill fare the sons of the denouncer.”³ 5

I am become the people’s byword,
 Nay, I am unto them as Tophet.⁴

While dimmed mine eyes are, from vexation,
 And all my members are as shadows.

True men are at such things astonished,—
 The guileless chafing at the guileful ;

Yet doth the just his course continue,
 The clean of hand grow ever stronger.

But come now, all of you,—resume ye :— 10
 I shall not find a sage amongst you.

¹ Lit., *If not.*

² Lit., *mine eye doth remain amid provocation.* This provocation he would like to live to fight down.

³ This is a free rendering of what appears like a proverbial saying : more strictly the lines read, (*Let one*) *denounce friends for their portion, and the eyes of his sons shall fail.* Job’s friends had accused him on no other ground than that he must be suffering for his faults, and he warns them of the result of their cruel insinuations.

⁴ Tophet means *spitting.* Hence some translate (with R. V., margin), “one in whose face they spit.” I prefer to leave the word as a name with which is associated all that is dismal and abhorrent.

Gone are my days, each purpose thwarted, 11
 Each object that my heart had cherished.
 My friends take night for day;¹ (and tell me) 12
 "The light is near unto the darkness."
 When Sheol the home is that I wait for, 13
 When I have made my bed in darkness,—
 Greeted the grave, "Ah, thou my father!" 14
 The worm, "My mother," or "My sister,"—
 Where then the hope (they set) before me? 15
 My hope? ah, who should look upon² it?
 Would they go down with me to Sheol, 16
 Or should we to the tomb together?³

Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, saying:— 18

How long wilt thou⁴ continue quibbling? 2
 Shew reason; then we may address thee.
 Why are we counted as dumb cattle? 3
 Why do we seem unclean before thee?
 For him who tears himself in anger 4
 Must the world's order be abandoned?
 The rock be moved from its foundation?

(Hear) more:⁵—as for the evil-doer,
 His light is (evermore) extinguished;

¹ All three had ended their speeches by holding out bright prospects for Job—the ending of his “night” in “day.” He replies that their words are delusive, his days are done, and where is his hope, if, as seems likely, the grave now only awaits him? But there is a touch of mischievousness in his language.

² Not simply “who shall see it?” but rather—(the “hope” being in reality the gruesome picture he draws)—*who would care to gaze on that?*

³ These last two lines follow the Septuagint Version. They make better sense, as Prof. Driver suggests, than the Hebrew, which is hopelessly full of difficulty, and has probably suffered at the hands of copyists.

⁴ “Ye,” in the Hebrew (also in lines 2 and 4); but the Septuagint more naturally has the singular: Μέχρι τίνος οὐ παύσῃ.

⁵ As if continuing from viii. 19.

His fire-flare gleameth forth no longer,	
The light within his tent is darkened,	6
The lamp put out that shineth o'er him.	
His sturdy stride becometh shortened :	7
His own devices work his downfall.	
His own feet into a net propel him,	8
As on the toils his walk he taketh.	
Some engine by the heel doth seize him,	9
Some trap that holdeth him securely ;—	
A hidden noose that <i>he</i> hath grounded, ¹	10
A snare (of his own) along his pathway.	
Terrors ² on every side affright him,	11
And hard upon his heels pursue him.	
His strength becometh hunger-bitten ;	12
And at his side a fate is waiting,	
That shall consume his body ³ piecemeal :	13
Death's first-born ⁴ shall consume him piecemeal.	
Plucked from his tent whereto he trusted,	14
'Twill march him to the King of Terrors.	
Others, not his, that tent shall live in.	15
Brimstone shall rain upon his dwelling.	
His roots shall be dried up beneath him,	16
His branch above him shall be withered.	
His memory from the land shall perish,	17
Nor shall his name be heard beyond it. ⁵	

¹ Lit., *hidden on the ground his (own) noose*.

² Phantoms, evidently of his own creating, as were the nets and snares just now spoken of.

³ Lit., *skin*.

⁴ The deadliest disease,—“first-born” being reckoned strongest ;—here is probably a covert allusion to the disease from which Job was suffering (Davidson, Driver).

⁵ Or, as the Hebrew may equally mean, in the open street—among the bazaars.

He shall be driven from light to darkness, 18
 Chased from the world.

Nor son nor son's son 19
 Shall he have left among his people,
 Nor one survivor in his dwellings.¹
 Posterity at his doom² shall marvel, 20
 As they more near him had been awe-struck.
 Ay, such the homes are of the wicked :
 Such his abode who God ignoreth.³ 21

Then answered Job, saying :—

How long mean ye my soul to harrow, 2
 And grind me with hard words to pieces ?
 Ten times already have ye taunted 3
 And shamelessly misunderstood me.
 Had I in very deed been erring,
 Then let abide with me my error. 4
 Must ye indeed swell out against me,
 And charge me on my ignominy,⁴ 5
 Know then, 'tis *God*⁵ that hath undone me,
 'Tis He hath cast His net about me. 6
 See, I cry "Wrong!" but am not answered :
 Cry loudly, but there is no justice. 7
 He hath set bounds my way to hinder,
 And darkness thrown upon my pathways. 8
 He hath despoiled me of my glory,
 And hath removed my crown from off me : 9

¹ This is peculiarly bitter, as it fitted Job's case.

² Lit., *day* : day of his doom.

³ Lit., *of him who knows not God*, but the meaning is often extended as above.

⁴ Or, and maintain (as) against me my ignominious condition.

⁵ Not himself, as Bildad had just argued (xviii. 8 seq.).

On all sides ruined and undone me, ¹	10
And, as a tree, my hope uprooted.	
Yea, hot hath been His wrath against me,	11
Taking me for His adversary.	
His troops have massed themselves together,	12
And, casting up their way against me,	
Around my tent made their encampment.	
Far from me hath He put my brethren;	13
Estranged from me are those who knew me:	
Those nearest unto me have failed me,	14
And my acquaintances forget me.	
My guests, my maids, count me a stranger:	15
I am become an alien to them.	
I call my slave, but have no answer:	16
I must with cringing words intreat him.	
Unto my wife my breath is nauseous; ²	17
Unto my children ³ I am loathsome.	
Even do the little ones despise me,	18
Mocking whene'er I would stand upright.	
All my familiar friends abhor me;	19
All turn—even one ⁴ I loved—against me.	
Through skin and flesh my bones are pressing,	20
My gums my teeth alone protecting. ⁵	

21

Have pity, O my friends, have pity,
Seeing how the hand of God hath touched me.

¹ Lit., *and I am gone*.

² Lit., *strange*, with this sense.

³ His sons by his wife being dead, these may have been the children of concubines. ⁴ Lit., *this*.

⁵ This is evidently the meaning. The skin of his body was nowhere whole, but the covering of his teeth still remained intact. A.V. and R.V. render literally, “I am escaped with the skin of my teeth,” and this has passed into a proverb to express a narrow escape; but this is scarcely the meaning here.

Why press me hardly, even as God doth,
And with my flesh remain unsated?¹ 22

Oh that my words were put in writing,
That to a book they were committed:
That on a rock with pen of iron
And molten lead they might for ever
Remain engraven! 23
24

Notwithstanding,
I know that my Redeemer² liveth;
That o'er (my) grave³ shall one hereafter⁴
Rise up (for me); and when my body—⁵
This (flesh)—hath undergone destruction⁶
I shall see God withal from out it;⁷ 25
26

¹ In the Semitic languages to “eat up the flesh” is to calumniate or slander.

² In the Hebrew *Goel*, which as applied to *man* means deliverer, vindicator, avenger, or representative; but as applied to *God* means Deliverer or Redeemer (Gen. xlvi. 16; Ps. xix. 14, ciii. 4; Is. xlix. 7, 26, liv. 5, 8). The term can be accepted as used in these passages.

³ Lit., *dust*; poetical for grave, as is evident from xvii. 16, xx. 11, and xxi. 26.

⁴ *One hereafter*: one word, *aḥarōn*, an after-comer.

⁵ Lit., *my skin*, but *skin* is sometimes used figuratively for *body*, as in xviii. 13. “*When*” is strictly *after*.

⁶ “*Hath undergone destruction*.” Literally the line reads: *And after—my skin—(they) have struck down* (as a tree), or, *broken up—this*. But having no nominative the verb is taken passively, as by Davidson and R.V.

⁷ Lit., *from my flesh*. “From” is ambiguous, and, as in English, may mean either *out of*, i.e., *away from*, or *from (in)*, as the stand-point of vision. In ix. 15 it has the force of a negative: “unblemished” is there, literally, *away from blemish*. A vast difference, doctrinally, depends upon the two ways of taking the word. Either Job would see God *in* his flesh resuscitated, or *out of* it. I leave the matter, as most others do, in the ambiguity in which it is found.

Whom I shall see, in mine own person,¹— 27
 Mine eyes behold, and not another.²—
 My reins within me fail (with longing).³
 Say ye, “How shall we press him hardly,⁴ 28
 Seeing we find in him⁴ right reason?”⁵
 Fear for yourselves the sword (of justice);⁶ 29
 For many⁶ are the sword’s avengings,⁷
 So ye may know there is a judgment.

Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and 20 said:—

Must then my thoughts yet force me for- 2
 ward?⁸
 Must then hot feelings stir within me?
 Am I to hear reproof that shames me?— 3
 Then let a breath of reason clear me.⁹
 Know’st thou this truth—from bygone ages— 4
 Since man was placed on earth—that always
 Brief was the triumph of the wicked,
 A flash the joy of the ungodly?
 Though to the heavens he tower in greatness,
 Yea, though his head may reach the welkin,¹⁰ 6

¹ Lit., *for me*, i.e., for myself.

² That is, *I*, not another. The Hebrew words are, *and not a stranger*. But the heaping up of first persons, to express his assurance of personally seeing his Deliverer, makes it almost certain that here again is meant “no one different from myself.”

³ So Driver. Renan supplies “*d’attente*.”

⁴ In *him*, rather than in *me*; see margin of R.V.

⁵ Lit., *the root of the matter*.

⁶ See Fuerst’s Lexicon, on *ḥēmāh*.

⁷ Lit., *sins*, i.e., sins deserving of the sword.

⁸ Make me turn back (to argue).

⁹ Or, then shall a breath from my understanding be my witness.

¹⁰ Clouds (Germ. *Wolken*), or skies.

Yet shall he disappear for ever, 7
 As the vile ordure of his dung-heap !
 And they who saw him say, Where is he ?
 Fled as a dream, none more shall find him ; 8
 Chased off, like some nocturnal vision.
 The eye that saw no more shall see him, 9
 Nor shall his home again behold him.
 Unto the poor his sons shall pander ; 10
 Yea, his own hands restore his substance.
 Though full his frame of youthful vigour, 11
 That vigour shall be buried with him !
 Though evil in his mouth be pleasant, 12
 Yea, though beneath his tongue he hide it,
 And fondle with it, loth to lose it, 13
 Retaining it about his palate,
 Yet shall that food change in his stomach, 14
 And be the gall of asps within him.
 Gulping down wealth, he shall disgorge it ; 15
 Forth from within him God shall cast it.
 Of asps he shall absorb the poison, 16
 The hissing snake his death-stroke dealing.
 No more shall he behold the rivers, 17
 The streams that flow with milk and honey.
 He shall restore his wage¹ untasted, 18
 Like (ill-)got wealth,—nor e'er enjoy it.

Because he crushed the poor,—forsook them,— 19
 Broke down their home and would not build it,
 Because his greed knew no abatement, 20
 He shall not keep² his dearest treasures.
 Since nought was left that he devoured not ; 21
 So his own wealth shall not continue.

¹ Lit., *his toil*. He shall not enjoy the fruit of his labour.

² Or, get off with.

He shall feel want, in full abundance,	22
All toilers' hands shall turn against him.	
Wherewith to fill his paunch there <i>shall</i> be!—	23
His fiery fury One shall send him,	
Raining upon him his devouring. ¹	
Weapon of iron though he flee from,	24
Arrow ² of brass doth yet transfix him;	
He draweth it forth, and from his body,	25
Yea, from his gall, it cometh glistening;	
Ah, then, the terrors are upon him!	
Dark fate is destined for his treasures:	26
A fire unkindled ³ shall devour him,	
Consuming in his tent the remnant. ⁴	
Heaven shall reveal his guilty doings,	27
And earth as witness rise against him.	
The increase of his house shall vanish,	28
Swept forth in time of God's displeasure.	
Such is—from God—the wicked's portion;	29
The heritage, by God decreed him.	

And Job answered, saying:—

21

Oh listen to my words,—but listen;	2
And <i>that</i> —be <i>that</i> your consolations! ⁵	
Bear with me until I have spoken;	3
And, after, take thou ⁶ up thy mocking.	
For me,—am I of <i>man</i> complaining?	4
How should my soul be not impatient?	

¹ An ambiguous word, which means either his food or his destruction.

² Lit., *bow*.

³ Lit., *not blown*: the lightning, or “fire of God,” such as had fallen on Job’s flock and his servants (i. 16).

⁴ Any survivor.

⁵ Lit., *and this shall be your consolations*, i.e., of me.

⁶ To Zophar, whose speech had been both irrelevant and insulting.

Oh look on me, and be astonished ; 5
 And hand on mouth—be that your posture.
 Ah, when I think hereon I shudder,
 And horror fixeth on my body :—
 Why do the wicked live,—grow old, too,— 7
 Yea, and increase in strength and vigour ?
 Their seed they see secure beside them,
 Before their eyes they have their offspring ;
 Their homes are peaceful, fear they know not,
 Nor is the rod of God upon them.¹ 9
 Their bull engendereth, unfailing ; 10
 Their cow will calve, nor e'er miscarry ;
 Their little ones, like flocks for number,
 Forth they dismiss, to skip and gambol.
 They raise the song, with lute and timbrel,
 And to the sound of pipe make merry. 12
 Their days they while away in pleasure ; 13
 And, ere they know,² go down to Sheol.
 Yet unto God their words were, “Leave us :
 “The knowledge of Thy ways we like not.
 “What is the Almighty should we serve Him ? 15
 “And what our gain should we approach Him ?”
 Is not in their own hands their welfare ? 16
 —[Far be from me their evil counsel !]—
 How, tell me, is “their lamp extinguished ”?³ 17
 How doth their judgment overtake them,
 Or God mete woes to them in anger ?
 Where are they straw before the wind-gust,
 Or chaff swept onward by the tempest ? 18

¹ A pathetic contrast to his own case ; serving also a denial to Zophar's statements.

² In a twinkling. Their death is easy and quick. Sudden death was regarded as a blessing.

³ Bildad (xviii. 7) had used this expression.

“God layeth his sin upon his <i>children</i> ”?	19
Requite God <i>him</i> ,—himself should feel it.	
Let his own eyes see his destruction,	20
Let <i>him</i> drink down the Almighty’s anger.	
How should he mind the home he leaveth,	21
When his appointed time is over?¹	
“Shall any be God’s teacher?” (say ye?)	22
“His,—Who is Judge of heavenly beings?”²	
One man will die in fullest vigour,	23
With all around in peace and quiet:	
What time his pails with milk are brimming,	24
And in his bones lie moist the marrows.	
And one will die, with soul embittered,	25
With the sweet things of life untasted.	
They will lie down in dust together,	26
And both alike the worm will cover.	
Look you, I know your thoughts,—the counsels	27
Whereby ye violently wrong me.	
“Where now,” say ye, “the prince’s	28
dwelling?”	
And, “Where the tent where lived the wicked?”	
Have ye not asked of them that travel,—	29
Not known their tales,—how that the lawless	
Is spared in days of great disaster,	30
Sped forth when anger’s floodgates open?³	
Who, to his face, his ways reproacheth?	
Who doth requite him for his doings?	31

¹ More strictly, when the number of his months is cut short.

² For some such sayings of theirs, cf. iv. 17, 18, xv. 8, 13. These questions he does not answer, and returns abruptly to his old position (ix. 22 seq.).

³ Conducted away on the day when the floods of wrath descend (Fuerst).

And when borne forth (at last) to burial, 32
 Anear his tomb shall one¹ be watching.
 Sweet then to him the valley's earth-clods ! 33
 While after him, in long procession,
 Wend all men,² countless, as before him.
 How vain to me then are your comforts ! 34
 How false unto the end your answers !

Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, saying :— 22

Can man advantage God, I ask ?— Nay, 2
 rather,
 He that is prudent doth *himself* advantage.
 That thou wert just, what were it to the 3
 Almighty ?
 What gain to Him, if all thy ways were perfect ?
 Is it thy piety that He reproveth,— 4
 For which He entereth with thee into judgment ?
 Nay, is it not that thou are greatly wicked,— 5
 That thine iniquities have had no limit ?
 That thou hast taken pledges of thy brother 6
 For nought, and stripped the naked³ of their
 clothing ?
 That thou refusedst water to the fainting, 7
 And didst withhold thy bread from him that
 hungered ?
 Ay, to the man of might the land belongeth ! 8
 And he must dwell therein whose head is highest !⁴

¹ He reposes in his mausoleum, which is surmounted by his statue, according to Egyptian custom (Renan).

² i.e., all alike, good or bad, have the same end. I cannot think, with some, that Job is saying here that the wicked man shall have his numerous *imitators*. The words “all men”—all mankind—precide that idea.

³ The barely-clad.

⁴ Lit., whose person is respected.

Thou hast ejected widows, empty-handed, 9
 The arms of orphaned children have been broken !

For this it is the nets are now around thee, 10
 For this that sudden fear thy soul dismayeth ;—
 A darkness, rather, that thou mayest see not, 11
 A deluge, whose deep waters overwhelm thee.

Abideth God not in the height of heaven ? 12
 Behold the stars aloft,—how high, how distant !
 And dost thou say then, “ How hath God per- 13
 ception ? ”

“ How shall He judge of aught athwart the dark-
 ness ? ”

“ Clouds are His veil, His vision intercepting ; 14
 “ And on the arch of heaven His walk He
 taketh ” ?

Wilt thou that everlasting path adhere to, 15
 The path that men of impious life have trodden ?
 —Men that were snatched away or e'er their 16
 time came,

The ground beneath them swept as by a torrent :¹
 People who said to God, “ Depart Thou from us,” 17
 And, of the Almighty, “ How shall He affect us ? ”
 While He it was who filled their homes with 18
 blessings.

—[Far be from me the counsel of the wicked !]—
 (Whose fate) the righteous saw, with hearts up- 19
 lifted,
 The innocent exulting, one with other,²
 (Saying), “ Ah, so our adversaries perish ! ” 20
 And their abounding wealth the fire devoureth.”

¹ Alluding, it would seem, to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, or some similar catastrophe.

² *inj lamo*, among themselves.

Acquaint thyself with Him, and be in safety;
 This do, and bright will be thy future fortune.
 Accept instruction¹ from His mouth, I pray thee,
 And treasure in thy heart His words.

Return thou 23

Unto the Almighty for thy restoration,²
 And from thy tents put far away all evil;
 And in the dust bestow the ore thou treasur'st,²⁴
 Among the wady's rocks thy gold of Ophir;
 Then shall the Almighty be to thee thy treasure;²⁵
 Yea, He shall be to thee thy glittering silver!
 Then shalt thou glad thyself in the Almighty,²⁶
 And lift thy face to God.

Then shalt thou offer 27

Thine orison to Him, and He will hear thee;
 Then may'st thou render Him thy votive offerings.
 So shall stand fast the thing that thou decidest,²⁸
 And light shine out upon thine every pathway.
 So shalt thou say of humbling, "Tis uplifting."²⁹
 Yea, him with downcast eyes shall God deliver.
 Him even shall He save that is not blameless;³⁰
 And through thy purity³ shall he have safety.

And Job replied, saying:—

23

E'en yet⁴ my plaint is (deemed) rebellion,—²
 (Although) my hand repress⁵ my groaning.

¹ Or, the Law—*Torah*.

² Lit., *If thou return . . . thou shalt be builded*. An “if” is also in the second clause.

³ Strictly, *the cleanness of thy hands*. Through Job's merits the culpable should be saved, or spared.

⁴ To-day.

⁵ Be heavy upon.

Oh that I knew where I might find Him,— 3
 That I might come to His tribunal!
 I would set forth my cause before Him ; 4
 Would fill my mouth with protestations ;
 Would learn what answer He might render, 5
 And know what He would tell me, clearly.
 —Would He with His great might oppose 6
 me ?

Nay, surely, *He* at least would heed me :
 An upright man would there be pleading 7
 Before Him ; and from my arraignment
 I should for ever be delivered.

(But) see, although I turn me eastwards, 8
 Or westwards, nowhere do I find Him.
 Search¹ I the north, or where He hideth
 Toward the south, I do not see Him.

Yet, since the way I take He knoweth, 10
 As gold I shall come forth from trial.²
 His track my foot hath firmly followed ; 11
 His way have I kept with step unswerving ;
 Nor shrunk from that His lips commanded ;
 Within my bosom³ I have treasured 12
 Whate'er behest His mouth hath uttered.

But He is ONE,⁴ and who shall turn Him ? 13
 He doeth what His soul desireth.

¹ “Search I.” The Hebrew has *amid His works*. Professor Driver suggests the more likely reading found in the Syriac version, which I have adopted.

² After He has tried me.

³ Or, more than the rule, or task, appointed me. The Septuagint and Vulgate read “*in my bosom*” (‘בָּנֶסֶת instead of ‘בָּנֶסֶת).

⁴ Lit., *in one*; in one mind. The phrase evidently means, *He is the Unchanging One*.

And what my fate¹ is He will finish. 14
 And many such are His disposings.
 Therefore am I dismayed before Him ; 15
 I fear Him as I ponder o'er them.
 'Tis God—'tis He—Who hath unmanned me ;² 16
 'Tis the Almighty hath dismayed me ;—
 For not in face of dark disaster, 17
 Nor of myself, whom darkness shroudeth,
 Am I undone.

24

Why are not seasons
 (Of reckoning) kept³ by the Almighty ?
 And wherefore may not they that know Him
 Perceive His days (of retribution) ?

There are that take away the landmarks ; 2
 Steal others' flocks, and feed upon them ;
 Drive forth the ass of orphaned children, 3
 And take for pledge the widow's plough-ox.
 Out of the way they turn the needy,— 4
 Till the land's poor retreat together.
 See these—wild asses of the desert !— 5
 How they go forth amid their labour
 In quest of prey.⁴ Theirs the waste region,
 That food (must furnish) for their children.
 Out in the plain they cut their forage,⁵ 6
 And glean the tyrant's⁶ late-ripe vintage.

¹ What has been appointed or determined for me.

² Lit., *made my heart soft*, or *faint*.

³ Held in reserve, or laid up.

⁴ The pickings of the desert, usually sought by wild creatures.

⁵ Or, in the field, not theirs, they reap. קְלִי (their forage), according to many Jewish interpreters, should be written קְלִי לְבָשׂ (two words) = *not theirs* (Fuerst).

⁶ Lit., *the wicked*, their evictors.

Nude lie they through the night; no garment, 7
 No covering from the cold is left them.

Drenched by the rain-storms of the mountains, 8
 They hug the rock for lack of shelter.

There are that seize by force¹ the orphan, 9
 And from the poor exact their pledges;
 Hence these must go unclad, uncovered; 10
 Must carry sheaves, while weak with hunger;
 Must fill, within their walls, the oil-vat; 11
 Must tread, while faint with thirst, the wine-
 press.

Men's groans are rising from the city, 12
 And wounded souls are making outcry;
 Yet God regardeth not the injustice!

Others² there be that are rebellious 13
 Against the light; whose ways they know
 not,

Whose paths they never can abide in.
 Before the light the murderer riseth, 14
 That he may slay the poor and needy.

The adulterer's eye the dusk awaiteth,
 That he may say, "No eye shall see me," 15
 And for his face a mask he maketh.

Also by night the robber roameth,⁴ 16 (14c)³
 Breaking through dwellings in the darkness.
 Closely by day themselves immuring,
 The light they know not. Nay, the morning

¹ The phrase rendered "*by force*" may mean equally *from the breast*.

² Lit., *these*, as introducing another class.

³ This line in the Hebrew seems displaced, and reads best in this connection. We have, moreover, by placing it here, examples of violations of the Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Commandments *in their order* (Dr. G. H. Bateson-Wright).

⁴ Professor Driver's emendation for *and in the night he is a thief*.

To *them* were even as are the Death-shades ;
For of those Shades they know the terrors !

“ Swift o'er the surface of the waters,”
(So say ye), “ glide they¹ (to destruction) ;
“ Their portion in the land is cursèd ;
“ No more may they return, retracing
“ The way that leadeth to the vineyards.
“ As drought and heat consume snow-waters,
“ So Sheol consumeth the transgressors.
“ The womb forgetteth them, (that bare
them).

“ While there the worm rejoiceth o'er them
“ Here nevermore are they remembered.²
“ Ay, as the tree is snapped, so Wrong is.
“ (Twas these) who battened on the barren
“ That had no son,³—who the lone widow
“ Refused to help ! ”

Nay ; God prolongeth
The lives of despots by His power :
He that despaired of life yet riseth.⁴
‘Tis given to such to live securely ;
They are upheld ; their ways He watcheth.
Raised high ; and gone in one brief moment ;⁵
Laid low, yet gathered as all other ;
Reaped as the crowns of corn (full ripened).

¹ Lit., *he* (with emphasis). But singular and plural in this passage (18–21) are used indiscriminately in the Hebrew. I have thought it less confusing to use the plural uniformly.

² The Heb. words are very terse :—*his dainty the worm . . . (he) is ever not remembered.*

³ Lit., *that beareth not*, meaning, hath no son to support her.

⁴ i.e., recovereth.

⁵ Compare xxi. 13, where also Job pictures the prosperity and the quick and easy death of such men.

Give me the lie,¹ if so it be not,
And be my word accounted worthless !

25

Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, saying :— **25**

With Him doth Awe reside, and Empire ; 2
 He maketh peace in His high places.
 His legions—are they not unnumbered ? 3
 His light—o'er whom doth it arise not ?
 How then with God shall man be righteous, 4
 Or child of woman be untarnished ?
 Lo, even the moon were void of lustre, 5
 The very stars impure, before Him.
 How much less man, that a mere worm is, 6
 The son of man,—a thing that crawleth !

And Job replied, saying :— **26**

How hast thou² aided now the powerless ! 2
 Restored the arm so weak and nerveless !
 How hast thou counselled one so witless,— 3
 Deep learning in such store divulging !
 By help³ of whom were thy pronouncements ? 4
 And whose the lofty inspiration
 That thus from thee hath found an outlet ?

¹ Lit., *who giveth me the lie?*

² With some show of reason Dr. G. H. Bateson-Wright considers verse 2 as addressed to Eliphaz, whose words in iv. 3–5 are here reechoed; verse 3 to Zophar, compare xi. 6, 7; and verse 4 to Bildad, who has now merely mimicked the thoughts of Eliphaz.

³ Lit., *with whom*, meaning, with whose help. See last note. The word *eth* (*נָשׁ*) has the same force in Gen. iv. 1 (R.V.); “*I have gotten a man with (the help of) the Lord.*” This rendering, rather than “*to whom*” (the usual rendering), gives a better parallelism with the next line, and also heightens the sarcasm.

Yea, before <i>Him</i> ¹ do the Rephaim ²	5
Tremble with fear, down under Ocean	6
And all its denizens; Sheol is open;	6
And all uncovered is Abaddon. ³	7
O'er empty space the North ⁴ He stretcheth,	7
The earth upon a void suspending.	
The floods in His dark veils He wrappeth,	8
Nor is the cloud rent 'neath the burden.	
The face of His great throne He shroudeth,	9
His cloud for canopy outspreading.	
Bounds hath He set unto the ocean, ⁵	10
Where light convergeth into darkness.	
The pillars of the heavens do tremble	11
At His rebuke, and are astounded.	
By His great power the sea He quelleth, ⁶	12
And smiteth by His skill the monster. ⁷	
Calmed by His breath the heavens are	13
brightened;	

¹ “Before Him,” in the Hebrew, occurs in conjunction with Sheol (verse 6); but relates to all the three statements. Job here introduces a sublime description of God’s majesty and mighty workings,—which seems intended to eclipse the effort of eloquence just made by Bildad on the same subject, and to show him at the same time how his teachings were misplaced.

² These may mean the shades of the departed, as often in other parts of Scripture; or those of a race of giants, as in Gen. xiv. 5 (R.V.).

³ Destruction; or the Destroyer. “His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek tongue he hath the name Apollyon (destroyer)” (Rev. ix. 11).

⁴ The polar regions—supposed to contain lofty mountains, poetically called the “pillars of the heavens” (v. 11).

⁵ The ocean was thought to surround the earth, but to have its “bounds,” beyond which all was darkness.

⁶ Or, stirs up. The verb has both meanings.

⁷ Rahab. See note on ix. 13.

His hand doth pierce the fleeing serpent.¹

These are the outskirts of His doings;
And what faint whisper hear we of Him!
But the (full) thunder of His power
Who shall conceive?

And Job, resuming his discourse, said:—

27

As God—as the Almighty liveth,
The God Who hath my suit rejected,
The God Who hath my soul embittered,—
While still my life remaineth in me

3

Yea, while God's breath is in my nostrils,
My lips shall ne'er confess an untruth,
My tongue give utterance to a falsehood.

4

Forefend it Heaven, that I should give you
Justification! Till I perish

5

I will not part with my uprightness:
I will maintain my righteous dealing;
Nor let it go. Nor doth my conscience
For any of my days reproach me.

6

O let my foe be as the wicked,
And mine opponent as the impious!
For what hath the profane to hope for,
When God shall cut him off, and take
him?

7

Will God give ear unto his outcry
When tribulation shall befall him?
If he found pleasure in the Almighty,
He would at all times call upon Him.

8

9

10

¹ The reference seems to be to eclipses of the sun, which some monster was supposed to eat up. The same idea has always prevailed in China. Renan translates the line thus: "His hand created the fleeing serpent," and thinks the constellation of the Dragon is spoken of. Schiaparelli, however, refuses to admit this.

I will instruct you how God worketh;¹ 11
 The Almighty's ways² disguise I will not.
 Behold, all ye yourselves perceive them; 12
 Why then this³ vain imagination
 Have ye indulged so vainly, (saying);—
 “This is—from God—the wicked's portion,”⁴ 13
 “And this the heritage of oppressors
 “Which they receive from the Almighty:
 “Although his children may be many,¹⁴
 “Tis for the sword; nor shall his offspring
 “Have bread enough; they who survive him 15
 “Shall in some deadly pest⁵ be buried;
 “Nor shall his widowed wives make mourn-
 ing.
 “Although as dust he heap up silver, 16
 “And pile, as bricks, stores of apparel,
 “Pile may he, but the just shall wear it, 17
 “And the upright shall divide the silver.
 “The house he builds is as a moth's house, 18
 “Or as the shed the watchman reareth.⁶

¹ Lit., *will teach you in the hand of God.*

² Lit., *what is with the Almighty; i.e., His ways with the wicked;* with a subtle hint that the *friends* had been so disguising them.

³ The word “*this*” refers, as often, to what follows; compare x. 13 and xxxv. 1. I venture to think that it is because this little word has escaped the attention of translators and commentators that so much difficulty has been found in this speech of Job. (Davidson devotes *four pages* to the difficulty!) If the verses 13–23 are taken as Job's own utterance, they will, of course, be a contradiction of all that he has so far maintained as to God's dealings with the wicked.

⁴ Zophar's exact words (xx. 29),—(bearing out last note).

⁵ “Deadly pest,” literally *death*, or, as we should say, *mortality*. Sword, famine, pestilence are enumerated: three of God's “sore judgments.”

⁶ A frail structure. Cf. Is. i. 8: “As a booth in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers.”

“ Rich he may die, yet have no burial, ¹	19
“ And be as nought on his awaking! ²	
“ Flood-like shall terrors overtake him;	20
“ A storm (that) night away shall snatch him;	
“ Gone then! borne on the fierce sirocco;	21
“ Torn from the neighbourhood that knew him.	
“ Yea, it shall hurl at him, not sparing,	22
“ Though hard he strive to scape its power.	
“ Hand-clappings there shall be, and hissing;	23
“ Against him, from the place that knew him.”	

(INTERLUDE)

There ³ is a place whence cometh silver;	28
Also for gold, that man refineth.	
Iron from out the earth is taken;	2
And copper from the rock is molten.	
Man, setting limit unto darkness,	3
To furthest bounds investigateth	
Stones that lie deep in gloom and death-shade.	
Far from men's haunts a shaft he openeth,	4
Where, on the foot no more supported, ⁴	
Let down by men the (miners) dangle.	
From earth man's bread is; but thereunder,	5
As though by fire, 'tis devastated.	
There, in its stony heart, the sapphire	6
Hath place; and dust of gold is in it.	
The path thereto no eagle knoweth,	7
Nor hath the falcon's eye descried it.	

¹ Lit., *be not gathered* (to his fathers).² Lit., *when he opens his eyes, he is not*—an un-English expression.³ This “Interlude” is introduced with the causal particle *ঃ যি*, but as it has no reference it may, as sometimes elsewhere, be disregarded.⁴ Lit., as in A.V. and R.V., *forgotten of the foot*, i.e., their feet no longer helping them.

The “sons of pride” ¹ that way ne’er wended,	8
Nor hath the lion stalked athwart it.	
On the hard flint his hand man plieith,	9
Laying mountains at their roots in ruin.	
Amid the rocks he cutteth conduits, ²	10
His eye beholding every treasure.	
The ooze ³ of waters he restraineth,	11
And hidden things to light exposeth.	
But where shall wisdom be discovered,	12
And where the abode of understanding?	
Man knoweth not the pathway ⁴ to it;	13
’Tis found upon no land where life is:	
“In me,” saith the abyss, “it is not”;	14
And saith the sea, “With me it is not.”	
Not for choice gold may it be bartered,	15
Nor may its price be weighed in silver.	
’Tis not outweighed by gold of Ophir,	16
The precious onyx, or the sapphire.	
Glasswork ⁵ and gold compare not with it;	17
Nor shall the exchange thereof be jewels	
Inwrought with drossless gold. No mention	
Needs be of coral or of crystal.	18
Nay, above pearls is gain of wisdom.	

¹ Most probably reptiles; which would agree with xli. 26, also with the tradition that the serpent in Gen. iii., condemned to creep, was a “son of pride” (Wright’s *Job*).

² Stulms (Dillon).

³ Lit., *weeping*, a term said to be used even now by our excavators of tunnels (Cox, *Commentary on Job*).

⁴ The Septuagint reading.

⁵ Probably a setting of gold in glass—which would correspond to the jewels inlaid with gold of next clause. Wilkinson says, of the Egyptians, that “they had the secret of introducing gold between layers of glass; and in their bottles a gold band alternates in a series of blue, green, and other colours.”

Compare not Ethiopian topaz, 19
 Nor with pure gold let it be valued.

But whence, then, cometh it—this wisdom ? 20
 And where abideth understanding ?
 Hid thus from eyes of all things living, 21
 Kept secret from the fowls of heaven.
 Death and Abaddon say, “ Some rumour
 “ Our ears have heard thereof, (nought further).”

The way thereto God understandeth, 23
 And the abode thereof He knoweth ;
 For He the earth’s far bounds beholdeth, 24
 And seeth beneath the utmost heavens.
 What time He gave the winds their forces,¹ 25
 And to the waters their due measure ;
 What time He gave the rain its mandate, 26
 Their course the lightning and the thunder,—
 Then did He see it, and did name it, 27
 Gave form² to it, and then profoundly
 Gazing³ thereon, to man spake, saying :—
 “ Fear of the Lord,⁴ lo, that is Wisdom ;
 “ And to shun Wrong is Understanding.”

And Job continued his discourse, and said :— 29

Oh that I were as once⁵ aforetime, 2
 As in the days when God did guard me :
 When o’er my head His lamp was shining, 3

¹ Lit., weight, pressure.

² As in Prov. viii. 22.

³ Scanning it. The ordinary meaning of the verb, “ searched it out,” can hardly be appropriate in this connection. The language here used regarding Wisdom almost argues an acquaintance with the fine passage in Proverbs (viii. 22–31), where Wisdom is personified as seated with God, “ a master-workman,” and whose delight was with the sons of men.

⁴ Adonai.

⁵ Lit., in months.

And by its light I walked through darkness :
 As in my days of full fruition,¹ 4
 When on my tent God's friendship rested ;
 When the Almighty yet was with me, 5
 And when my children were about me ;
 When, too, my steps were bathed in butter, 6
 And rocks poured oil in streams beside me :
 When forth unto the city's gateway 7
 I fared, and there² my seat made ready,
 Then young men seeing me drew backward, 8
 And old men rose and stood (before me).
 Princes would then refrain from speaking, 9
 Put hand on mouth (while I addressed them).
 Hushed were the voices of the nobles, 10
 Their tongue adhering to their palate.
 The ear that heard me wished me blessing,³ 11
 The eye that saw me gave me witness :
 For when the poor appealed I freed him, 12
 And the orphan that had none to aid him.
 The vagrant's blessing came upon me ; 13
 The widow's heart I made exultant.
 I put on justice as a garment, 14
 Yea, justice *me* :⁴ my just decisions
 Were unto me as robe and turban.
 Eyes to the blind, feet to the halting 15
 Was I,—and father to the needy ; 16
 Sounding the cause of him I knew not ;
 Breaking the fangs of the oppressor, 17
 And from his teeth the prey releasing.

¹ Lit., *my days of autumn.*

² Lit., *in the open* (or broad) *place*, synonym for the gate—usually a large building where justice was administered.

³ Proclaimed me “happy,” or “blessed.”

⁴ Justice put on me : I was its impersonation.

Then said I,

18

“Anear my nest shall my demise be,
 “And as the sand¹ my days, far reaching.
 “My root hath freedom to the water,
 “My branch—the dew shall lodge upon it.
 “Undimmed for me shall be my glory;
 “Nor to my hand my bow² unpliant.”

19

20

Men then would hear me with attention,
 Waiting in silence for my counsel.

21

After my words they spake not further:
 My speech as drops distilled upon them.
 For me, as for the rain, they waited;
 Yea, gaped as for the rain of spring-time.
 I smiled on them when they distrusted,
 Nor could they cloud my cheerful aspect.³
 I chose their path; I sat as chieftain;
 I dwelt as 'mid his hosts a king doth;
 As one that comforteth the troubled.⁴

22

23

24

25

But now my juniors mock and scout me,— **30**
 Whose fathers I esteemed unworthy
 To set as watchers⁵ with my herd-dogs.

¹ It is probable that the word *ḥōl* (sand) should be *ḥūl* (phœnix); this was an ancient Jewish reading. If so, the verse might be translated,—

*Then said I,—self with nest consuming,
 My days shall, phanix-like, be many.*

² Symbol of power or vigour.

³ Lit., *the light of my countenance*.

⁴ Some think this line so abrupt as to be probably an interpolation; may it not be a subtle thrust at the would-be comforters?

⁵ *To set with the dogs of my herd*, i.e., to keep watch along with the dogs. The use of the herd-dog is limited in Eastern lands to night-watching.

And wherefore¹ is their violence to me?— 2
 (Creatures) to whom is lost all manhood.—
 Men shrivelled up through want and hunger, 3
 Who gnaw the arid earth, at even,
 Out on the wastes and wildernesses;
 Men gathering salt-wort by the bushes, 4
 Or on the roots of broom subsisting;
 Men chased as outcasts from their fellows, 5
 With shouts, as unto thieves, behind them;
 Men dwelling in the clefts of valleys, 6
 In earth-holes and in rocky caverns;
 Men (ass-like) braying in the bushes, 7
 Or lying huddled 'mid the brambles;
 Low-born ones, yea, and nameless-born ones, 8
 Beaten and banished from the country;—
 Of these I now become the jest-song! 9
 Yea, unto such am I the byword.
 They hold me in contempt, they shun me, 10
 Nor from my face withhold their spitting.
 Since (God) hath loosed my cord, and bowed 11
 me,
 These, too, cast off restraint before me.
 On my right hand arise the rabble, 12
 My feet dislodging, and preparing
 Against me their destructive inroads.²
 My path they utterly have ruined, 13
 Unto my fall each helping other,—
 Men who were, else, without a helper!³

¹ Why? not to what profit. So again I read violence for strength of hand. And these renderings fall in with what goes before and what follows.

² Lit., casting up against me their ways of destruction. The figure is that of a siege.

³ Helpless outcasts could yet help each other in such circumstances.

As by a gaping breach they enter, Amid the ruin rolling onwards.	14
Terrors are turned upon me, scattering As by a wind my reputation ;	15
And as a cloud is gone my welfare.	
And now my soul wells forth upon me ; ¹	16
Days of distress close in around me ;	
By night my bones are pierced and burrowed,	17
And drop away from off me piecemeal.	
My gnawing pains ² have no cessation.	
By (their) great violence is my mantle	18
Become misshapen, round me twisting,	
Tight as the collar ³ of my tunic.	
Into the quagmire (God) hath plunged me :	19
I am become but dust and ashes.	
I cry to Thee ; nought dost Thou answer :	20
I rise ; Thine eyes are then upon me ;	
Ruthless against me Thou becomest ;	21
With violence dost Thou persecute me.	
Lifting me up unto the tempest	22
Thou makest me to ride upon it	
Until I melt amid its roaring.	
I know that unto death Thou'l bring me,	23
And to the place Thou hast appointed—	
The house of meeting of all living.	
But shall a man, when falling headlong,	24
Stretch out no hand ? Or in disaster	
Ne'er cry for help ? Have I myself not	25

¹ In tears of anguish.

² My *gnawers*. Something of the kind is alluded to in the preceding lines.

³ The neck or upper opening (lit., *mouth*) of the inner garment. Davidson suggests that "the reference in the verse is to Job's writhing under his pains till the clothes are twisted tightly about him."

Wept for a man in time of trouble?
 Was not my soul grieved for the needy?
 —When *I* for comfort looked, came evil; 26
 When I awaited light, came darkness!
 My reins within me boil, unceasing; 27
 Days of unlooked-for¹ pain befall me.
 In gloom I wander, ne'er in sunshine; 28
 And when I rise in the assembly,
 There do I raise (such) wailing outcry
 (As) were I brother to the jackal, 29
 Or were companion to the ostrich!
 Swarth, livid, is my skin upon me; 30
 And fiery are my bones with fever.
 So is my harp attuned to mourning, 31
 My pipe unto the wail of weepers.

A compact with mine eyes I made me,² 31
 That on a maid they should not linger.³
 Else, what from God on high (my) portion,
 The award from heaven, from the Almighty!
 Cometh not doom upon the wicked,— 2
 Disaster upon evil-doers?
 Doth *He* not see my ways? not reckon
 The very number of my footsteps? 3
 4

If I have companied with Falsehood,
 If toward Deceit my foot have hasted, 5

¹ The word seems to be required in the sentence;—days of distress have caught me—been beforehand with me.

² This chapter contains Job's final solemn protest against the imputation of wrong-doing; and his categorical denial of all grave offences, in thought and deed.

³ Lit., *How should I then regard (intently) a maiden?* The “lust of the eyes” is meant. But only some such circumlocution as the above can make English of the line.

—[May God in even balance weigh me, 6
 And my integrity acknowledge!]—
 If from the Way my step have wended, 7
 And if my heart mine eyes have followed,
 Or to my hand a stain yet cleaveth ;
 Then let another eat my sowings, 8
 Yea, let my harvest be uprooted !

If e'er my heart unto a woman 9
 Have been beguiled, and I in secret
 Have lurked about my neighbour's doorway ;
 Then let my wife grind for another : 10
 As concubine let others take her !
 For that were heinous crime,—a misdeed 11
 Meet to be punished by the judges :—
 That fire doth burn unto Abaddon ! 12
 That (deed) should work my utter ruin.¹

If e'er my servants' cause I slighted, 13
 When man or maid contended with me,
 What should I do when God ariseth ? 14
 What answer give when He shall visit ?
 Had we not both the same Creator, 15
 And in the womb one only Maker ?

If from their wish I held the needy, 16
 Or stayed the widow's expectation,²
 Or ate, myself alone, my portion, 17
 The fatherless therein unsharing,
 —[He who looked up³ to me as father 18
 Since I was young,—she whom I guided

¹ Lit., *should root out all my increase.*

² Caused her eyes to fail.

³ This is evidently the meaning of the verb—*treated as one older or greater—not grew up with.*

From infant days¹;]—if I have noted
One perishing for want of clothing,
Or seen the poor bereft of covering,
And then his loins have failed to bless me,
Unwarmed with fleeces from my yearlings;
Or raised my hand against the orphan,
Seeing my supporters in the council;²—
Then may my shoulder leave its setting,—
My arm be shattered from its socket!³
For God's sore judgment was my terror:
From awe of Him such things I could not.

If e'er my hope on gold I rested,
Speaking thereof⁴ as “my dependence”;
Or in abounding wealth found pleasure,
And in the stores my hand had gotten;
Or, seeing the lamp of day, bright beaming,
The moon, too, moving in her splendour,
My heart have secretly been tempted,⁵
And I have wafted kisses to them;⁶
This, too, were crime deserving judgment:
I had been false to God in heaven!

Ne'er found I pleasure in the failure
Of him that bore me hate,—exulting
Whene'er adversity befell him;
Nay, I kept back my tongue from sinning,
Nor would I with a curse proscribe him.⁷

¹ Lit., *from my mother's womb*.

² Lit., *in the gate* (where causes were heard).

³ Strictly, from the bone of the upper arm.

⁴ *And called the fine gold “my dependence,”*—a mere poetic variation. Gold was variously named, as in chap. xxviii.

⁵ To idolatry.

⁶ Lit., *And my hand hath kissed my mouth*.

⁷ Lit., *ask his life*.

Ne'er could my tent-men say not, "Shew us 31
 "A guest unsated at his table."¹

Ne'er in the street hath slept the stranger: 32
 My doors I opened to the highway.

Ne'er, human-wise, my faults I covered,— 33
 Hiding my sin within my bosom
 From fear of swelling crowd, or dreading 34
 Scorn from the houses of the nobles,—
 So keeping still, my door not leaving.

Oh that I had an ear to hear me! 35
 Here is my signature²—behold it!
 Let the Almighty give me answer;—
 (Would that I had) the indictment also
 Mine Adversary hath writ against me!
 'Truth, I would hoist it on my shoulder, 36
 Would bind it on me as a chaplet!
 I would recount to Him my goings;³ 37
 And as a prince would I approach Him!

If e'er my land cried out against me,⁴ 38
 Its furrows making moan together;
 If I, nought paying (for its purchase), 39
 Have been partaker of its fruitage,—
 Blasting the life of its possessor,—
 Let *there*, in place of wheat, grow briars, 40
 And noxious weeds instead of barley.

The words of Job are ended.

¹ Lit., *with his flesh*, i.e., the meat of his table.

² My mark, or cross; strictly my **T**, written anciently in the form **†** or **X**.

³ Lit., *the number of my steps*.

⁴ This last paragraph is generally thought to have been dislodged by some copyist from its proper place among the protestations—omitted by mistake, and then added to what was really the conclusion.

So these three men ceased to answer Job, because **32**
 he was righteous in his own eyes. Then 2
 was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of
 Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram;
 against Job was his wrath kindled, because
 he justified himself rather than God. Also 3
 against his three friends was his wrath
 kindled, because they had not found an
 answer, and condemned Job. Now Elihu 4
 had waited to speak unto Job, because they
 were older than himself. And when Elihu 5
 saw that there was no answer in the mouth
 of these three men, his wrath was kindled.
 And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered 6
 and said:—

I am but young and ye are aged;
 So held I back, nor dared to shew you
 My knowledge. “Age,” quoth I, “should parley, 7
 “And multitude of years teach wisdom.”
 But yet in man there is a Spirit, 8
 And the inbreathing of the Almighty
 Endoweth them with understanding.
 ’Tis not the greatest that are wisest,
 The oldest that have clearest judgment.¹ 9
 Wherefore to me, say I, now hearken;
 Let even me set forth my knowledge.
 Lo, I was waiting for your speeches,
 Was listening for your explanations
 While ye for words were cogitating;
 Now with attention have I heard you, 10
 And lo, to Job was none convincing:
 His statements none among you answered.

¹ The superlatives are not in the Hebrew, but convey the sense.

Say not, "We have discovered wisdom— ¹	13
"God, and not man, must overcome him."	
—Not against <i>me</i> his speech arrayed he,	14
Nor with your words shall I rebut him.	
Discomfited! No more they answer:	15
They put away all further converse!	
And shall I wait because they speak not,—	16
Because they halt, and no more answer?	
Nay, even <i>I</i> my part will answer;	17
Even <i>I</i> will manifest my knowledge.	
For I am full of words: the Spirit	18
Within my body doth constrain me;	
My breast is, lo! as wine unopened,—	19
As wineskins new and nigh to bursting!	
Let me then speak, for my relieving,—	20
Open my lips and make rejoinder;—	
Withal respecting no man's person,	21
Nor using flattering terms to any;	
For nowise am I used to flatter;	22
(Else) would my Maker soon remove me.	

But now, O Job, I pray thee listen;	33
Give ear to every word I utter.	
My mouth, behold now, I have opened;	2
The organs ² of my speech have spoken;	
An upright heart my words (have prompted),	3
My lips speak simply of my knowledge:	

¹ i.e. in Job.

² Lit., *my tongue with my palate*. As showing the importance of what he has said and is going to say he indicates how his mouth, tongue, palate, heart, lips, and whole being inspired by God actuate him. Verse 3 might be rendered, "The uprightness of my heart and the knowledge of my lips have caused me to speak words purely" (i.e. unmixed with falsehood).

(I say), the Spirit of God hath made me, 4
 And the inbreathing of the Almighty
 Enquickeneth the life within me.¹
 Do thou reply to me, if able; 5
 Prepare thee, take thy stand before me.
 Lo, before God I am as thou art; 6
 I, too, from out the clay was moulded:
 Behold, no dread of *me* can awe thee, 7
 Nor shall my hand press hard upon thee.

But words thou saidst within my hearing,— 8
 Yea, still I hear the voice that spake them,—
 “I am pure,” thou saidst, “free from transgres- 9
 sion;
 “Am blameless; crime there is not on me;
 “Lo, He inventeth means² to foil me; 10
 “He holdeth me as hostile to Him;
 “My feet within the stocks He placeth,
 “And keepeth watch on all my movements.”³ 11
 Herein thou art not just, I answer;
 For God is higher far than mortals.
 Why dost thou strive against Him, seeing 12
 He answereth not for all His doings?
 Nay, in more ways than one God speaketh, 13
 And that when man doth least observe it.

In dreams, in visions of the night-time, 15
 When deep sleep falleth upon mortals,
 Or while they slumber on their couches,
 Then (secretly) their ears He openeth,
 And setteth seal to their instruction;

¹ xxxii. 8.

² Or, *findeth occasions*.

³ xiii. 23-28.

To turn the mean man from his doings, 17
 To keep from arrogance the mighty ;
 So from the pit his soul withholding, 18
 From deadly shafts his life preserving.

By pain, moreover, is he chastened 19
 Upon his bed ; when strife continual
 Is in his bones ; when food he loatheth, 20
 And dainty meats his soul abhorreth ;
 The while his flesh from sight doth vanish 21
 And bones are bare that once were
 covered ;
 While to the pit his soul approacheth, 22
 His life unto the Death-bestowers.¹

Perchance is by his side an angel, 23
 A messenger,² one of a thousand,
 Revealing to the man his duty ;
 Then God is gracious to him, saying, 24
 "Deliver him, that he descend not
 "Into the pit. I find a ransom."³
 (Soon then) the flesh on him becometh 25
 More fresh than even in his childhood ;
 Again in youthful days he liveth.
 Praying to God he hath His favour, 26
 And joyeth, to behold His presence.
 So is man's innocence restored him.
 And unto men this psalm he singeth :—
 "I went astray, right ways rejecting,
 "And yet was not my wrong requited ;

¹ The Slayers, the destroying angels.

² A messenger-teacher, or interpreter.

³ Comparing this with xxxvi. 18, the "ransom" is nothing else than Job's trial itself. Its discipline was his "saving" (xxxvi. 15).

"(God) from the pit my soul hath ransomed, 28
 "And still my life the light beholdeth."¹

Behold, in all these ways God worketh, 29
 Again and yet again, with mortals,
 That from the pit He may recover 30
 Their soul, with the light of life illumined.

Hear me now, Job, with ear attentive ; 31
 Be silent while I speak (yet further).
 (Or) if thou hast some word, make answer : 32
 Speak, for I long to do thee justice.
 If not, do thou to me yet hearken ; 33
 Be still, and I will teach thee wisdom.

Moreover Elihu answered and said :— 34

Hearken unto my words, ye sages ; 2
 Give ear to me, ye men of wisdom.
 For as of meats the palate judgeth, 3
 The ear discriminateth language.
 Let us apply a test to justice, 4
 And see wherein consisteth goodness :
 Among ourselves let us be certain.
 For Job averreth :—"I am righteous, 5
 "And God hath dealt with me unjustly."²

¹ One is tempted to vary the metre here, and to commit an anachronism by putting the little psalm into rhyme ; thus :

In wilful error once I strayed,
 Right ways for wrong I had rejected ;
 Yet hath He not my sin repaid,
 But from the pit my foot protected ;
 And so, my ransomed soul set right,
 My life still looketh on the light.

² Strictly, *hath taken away my right*.

“Despite my due, I am made a liar! 6
 “Though innocent, yet a deadly arrow¹
 “Hath pierced me.”

Where, now, is Job’s equal?— 7

He drinketh blasphemy like water!
 Hath joined the herd of evil-doers! 8
 Become companion of the impious!
 For he hath said, “No man is ‘vantaged
 “Although to God he shew devotion.” 9
 Hear then, ye men of understanding;
 Far be from God a wrongful action! 10
 Far from the Almighty aught of evil!
 Man’s work to man He recompenseth:— 11
 According to the way each taketh
 So doth He bid him find his guerdon.
 Nay, truly, God will do nought wrongful,
 The Almighty will not deal unjustly.

Who charged Him with the earth’s dominion, 13
 And the whole world to Him entrusted?
 Were He but of Himself regardful, 14
 Should He recall His breath, His spirit,
 Then would all flesh expire together, 15
 Man would revert to dust (and ashes).
 Hear this, then, in the name of reason! 16
 Unto my voice, my words, give audience.
 Can one that hateth justice govern? 17
 And thou, wilt thou condemn the Just
 One,
 The Mighty One, who calleth monarchs 18
 “Base creatures,” and their nobles “Villains,”—
 Who is not partial unto princes, 19

¹ Strictly, *mine arrow*, the arrow that has undone me.

Nor honoureth rich man more than poor man,
Seeing His hand hath both created?

Death cometh swiftly (to these great ones), 20

Even at the dead of night; their vassals
Are put in tumult, and forsake them;
And unseen hands remove the tyrant.

God's eyes upon man's ways are open, 21
Beholding every step he taketh.

(Before His gaze) there is no darkness, 22

No night of death itself,¹ whereunto
The evil-doer may go to hide him.

Nor is it twice² for man appointed 23
To come before Him into judgment:
He crusheth, without inquisition,

The great, and substituteth others. 24

Thus, through His knowledge of their doings, 25
Doth He by night³ o'erthrow and crush them;

He striketh them as evil-doers 26
In open sight of all beholders;

Because, by swerving from His guidance, 27
And disregarding all His counsels,⁴

They caused the poor man's cry to reach 28
Him,

The cry of the oppressed and helpless.

If *He* give peace, who should give trouble?⁵ 29

Hide He His face,—who shall behold Him?

As doth He both to men and nations,

¹ Shadow of death.

² A man's judgment is not *prolonged*: his deeds already judge him, and they are fully known to God.

³ *i.e.*, in an hour when they least expect it.

⁴ Lit., *ways*.

⁵ The antithesis seems required in this sense of the verb, rather than "condemn" (as R.V.).

Lest impious men have domination,
Lest there be those who snare the people. 30

Now unto <i>God</i> hath man said ever,	31
“I suffer, yet have not offended;	
“Shew Thou to me the (wrong) I see not,	32
“That, erring, I may err no longer”?	
Must God’s requital be according	33
As <i>thou</i> wilt, that thou dost refuse it?	
Nay, thou, not I , must face the question:	
Speak, then, according as thou knowest.	
Men of intelligence will tell me,	34
Yea, all wise men that listen to me,	
That Job is speaking ignorantly,	35
And that his words are void of reason.	
Ah then! let Job have out his trial,	36
Seeing he answereth like the wicked,	
And addeth to his sin rebellion,	37
Clapping his hands here in our presence,	
And heaping against God his speeches.	

And Elihu answered further, saying:— 35

Will this thy cause advantage, think'st thou? 2
—[“My clearance before God” thou call’st it!]
That thou shouldst ask what it doth serve thee— 3
What gain—to have kept thyself from sinning.¹
(This) *I*, with my own words, will answer,
With² those, too, of thy friends beside thee.

¹ To avoid confusion I have taken this line in *oratio obliqua* like the one before. With inverted commas, it would run: "What gain to have kept *myself*," etc.

² These lines are usually rendered: "I will answer thee, and thy companions with thee"; as if he were about to refute *them* also. But the pronoun "I" is emphatic, *i.e.*, in reference to his own words, and the

Direct thy gaze unto the heavens ;	5
Behold the skies, there far above thee :	
If thou have sinned, how should thy conduct	6
Aught injure Him (who dwelleth yonder) ?	
How, by repeated crime, affect Him ?	
Or, if thy conduct have been righteous,	7
What boon wouldest thou bestow upon Him ?	
What were He from thy hand receiving ?	
Thy crime affecteth <i>man</i> , thine equal,	8
Thy righteousness mankind (around thee).	
There are who groan, from long oppression,	9
Who 'neath the tyrant's arm make outcry,—	
None asking, "Where is God my Maker,	10
"Who filled the night with song, Who taught us	
"And gave us loftier understanding	11
"Than beast of earth or fowl of heaven?"	
There cry they, 'neath the proud dominion	12
Of tyrants ; and He doth not answer.	
No trustless cry, ¹ indeed, God heareth,	13
Nor can the Almighty look upon it.	
Much less thine own, in that thou sayest	14
Thou canst not see Him—that before Him	
Thy cause is—and thou waitest for Him.	
—And now, because God doth not punish	15
Job's ² anger, and when altogether	

word *eth* (וְ) in the second line looks more like the preposition "with" than the particle denoting the accusative case. See note on xxvi. 4. Also the very *first words* that Elihu uses are like those of Eliphaz (xxii. 12). Compare, too, the reasoning in verse 7 with xxii. 2, 3.

¹ Lit., *vanity*, unreality ; in this case a cry without any true trust in God.

² His (Job's) anger. Job's name, which really is not mentioned till verse 16, I place here for greater clearness. The last five lines are addressed to the *friends*, see verse 4.

His insolence He disregardeth,
His mouth to idle words he openeth,
And multiplieth senseless speeches.

Elihu also proceeded, and said :—

36

Give me brief space, and I will shew thee 2
How more for God may yet be spoken :—
I bring my wit to wider issues, 3
In rendering justice to my Maker.
My words, in sooth, are no inventions : 4
One sound in knowledge is before thee.
Lo, God is great, yet none o'erlooketh ; 5
Mighty in strength of understanding :
No lawless life doth He encourage,¹ 6
Rather, He righteth the afflicted :
Nor from the just His eyes averteth ; 7
But setteth them for aye with rulers
Upon the throne ; such are exalted.
And if so be they suffer downfall, 8
And wear the chain, the galling fetter,
Then would He shew them of their doings, 9
Their faults,—how they have grown high-minded ;
Opening their ear unto correction, 10
And bidding them renounce their folly.
Then if they hear and are obedient, 11
They live out all their days in comfort,
Their years in gladness.

If they heed not, 12

Then by some deadly stroke they perish,
And unawares take their departure.
But impious souls, that nurse resentment, 13
And 'neath God's fetters make no prayer,

¹ Quicken, or preserve ; a denial of Job's statement (xxiv. 22).

Die early; nay, they live no longer
Than do the votaries of Astarte !¹

God saveth sufferers by² their suffering,
Opening their ear by² their affliction.
From the pit's mouth *thyself* He lureth
To where thou mayst have room, not straitness;³
And where the spreading of thy table
May be replete with all abundance.⁴
But (if) thou fill'st thee, like the wicked,
With condemnation,⁵ condemnation
With penalty shall overtake thee.
Beware lest wrath lure thee to scorning;
Nor let the greatness of the ransom⁶
Turn thee aside: think'st thou thy riches,
Although unstinted, were its equal,—
Or all the power of thy resources?
Crave not the night (the night of judgment,
Such doom as that⁷) wherein whole peoples
Are made to perish on the instant.⁸
Take heed, turn not to thoughts so impious,
For *that* hast thou preferred to suffering!

¹ Lit., *their life is (as) among the Qedeshim*,—the *hierodouloi* of the Syrian temples. See 1 Kings xiv. 24, xv. 12, and other references. These votaries died prematurely.

² Or, *in*. ³ To freedom, without restraint. ⁴ Lit., *fatness*.

⁵ Condemnation of *God*, by Job, seems to be meant; followed then by God's condemnation of *him*.

⁶ See note on xxxiii. 24, and verse 15 above.

⁷ Helping words are necessary here. In this book the “night” is often used to express sudden judgment. Job had asked for death, and for a quick judgment. He had, therefore, *courted his doom*, and had asked for a judgment such as overtook the nations at the Flood, or the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.

⁸ Lit., *in their place*, on the spot, without time to escape.

God by His power may yet exalt ¹ (thee) :	22
What tutor with Himself compareth ?	
Who hath His plan appointed for Him ?	23
Or who shall say, "Thou hast wrought evil"?	
Bethink thee how thou shouldst His workings	24
Exalt,—the theme of praise with others,—	
Which all men gaze upon (in wonder),—	25
Which man as from afar beholdeth.	
Ay, God is great, how great we know not:	26
His years—unsearchable for number.	

"Tis He the water-drops refineth—	27
Distilled as rain amid His vapours,	
Poured forth from clouds, that send them dropping	28
Upon the multitudes of mortals.	
And who shall comprehend the rendings	29
Of the dark storm-cloud, or the thunders	
That emanate from His pavilion? ²	
There spreadeth He His light around Him,	30
Yet hideth (as in) depth of ocean. ³	
"Tis by such means ⁴ He doometh nations,	31
Or food supplieth in abundance.	
His hands He clotheth with the lightning,	32
Directing it whene'er He striketh.	
Its crash His onward march announceth;	33
The very herds proclaim His coming. ⁵	

¹ The same causative verb as in verse 24, rendered usually "magnify." Job could yet be "magnified" if he would bear his trial with patience, and would magnify God's wonderful works and ways.

² His tabernacle, or temporary dwelling, as in Ps. xviii. 11.

³ The bright and dark sides of the thunder-cloud seem here to be poetically pictured. R.V. has "He covereth the bottom of the sea" (!)

⁴ By His storms.

⁵ Most commentators find here the presentiment that animals have of coming storms.

Nay, my own heart thereat doth shudder, **37**
 And leapeth from its place (in terror).
 Hark ! hear His voice amid the roaring ; **2**
 'Tis from *His* mouth those mutterings issue.
 To every corner of the welkin **3**
 He speeds it forth, while to the outskirts
 Of earth His lightning-bolt He flashes.
 After the bolt the voice,—loud-roaring : **4**
 With His majestic voice He thund'reth.
 Nor, when 'tis heard, doth He withhold
 them.¹
 A marvel is God's voice in thunder. **5**
 Great things—beyond our ken—He doeth.

For He it is the snow that biddeth **6**
 Fall to the earth,—the rain-bursts also,
 The sudden shower, the mighty deluge.
 Then stayeth² He the hands of all men, **7**
 That each may learn to know His Maker.
 Then go the creatures to their coverts ; **8**
 Beasts to their dens repair for shelter.
 Forth from its Chamber³ comes the tempest, **9**
 And from the Bears⁴ the chilly winter.
 God by His breath the ice bestoweth,
 And locketh⁵ up the expanse of waters. **10**

¹ The thunder and lightning.

² Lit., *putteth a seal on*. But the cessation of labour during the rainy season is meant.

³ As a sort of Æolian cave (Renan). This would be from the south.

⁴ The *Mezarim*, or Fans; another name for the Two Bears (Schiaparelli).

⁵ Lit., *the breadth of waters is in a compact mass*; or, taking *mutsaq* as in verse 18, *is made into a mirror*.

He ladeth, too, the clouds with moisture ;	11
His lightning-cloud abroad He spreadeth,	
That circleth by His skilful steering	12
To accomplish all He doth enjoin it	
Round and about the whole world's surface.	
Whether 'tis for His earth's chastising,	13
Or whether in His loving mercy,—	
So He doth send it.	
To such matters	14
Give ear, O Job; rouse thee, and ponder	
On these, God's wondrous operations.	
Know'st thou His purpose in these marvels,	15
And why His cloud with light He bright'neth ?	
Know'st thou the poising of the storm-	16
clouds,—	
Those secret works of the Omniscient ?	
Canst thou,—whose clothes are hot upon thee	17
When earth from southern airs is stagnant,—	
Caust thou, as He, weld ¹ firm the welkin,	18
Hard, even as a molten mirror ? ²	
Say with what speech may we address Him !	19
None can we frame, we are in darkness.	
What if my words were brought before	20
Him !	
Did e'er man court ³ his own destruction ?	
E'en now the light men cannot look on	21
That gloweth dazzling in the heavens,	
When winds have crossed and purified them—	

¹ The Hebrew verb means to hammer out metals, and is also connected with the word for "firmament" (Driver); here it conveys the thought of the heavens being made "as brass" (Deut. xxviii. 23).

² Mirrors in the East were made of burnished metal, and are so still in some countries, *e.g.*, in Japan.

³ Lit., *speak*, here bespeak.

When from the north the glory¹ cometh;— 22
 What then of God the awful splendour!

The Almighty—though we fail to find Him— 23
 Though great His power—ne'er violateth
 His judgment and far-reaching justice.
 Thus men revere Him. He regardeth² 24
 None that doth pride himself in wisdom.

Then did Jehovah answer Job out of the storm, 38
saying:—

Who then is this that darkeneth counsel 2
 By words devoid of understanding?
 Gird up thy loins and play the man, now, 3
 And I will first interrogate thee,
 Then do thou answer me.

Where wast thou 4
 What time I laid the earth's foundations?
 Tell me,—if thou hast understanding,—
 Who fixed its measures?—thou shouldst know it,— 5
 Or who stretched forth the line upon it?
 Or whereupon were sunk its sockets? 6
 The corner-stone thereof—who laid it,
 When sang the morning stars in chorus, 7
 And all the sons of God exulted?
 Or who restrained with gates the ocean, 8
 As from the womb it issued, bursting,³

¹ Lit., *gold*. Professor Driver would read, with a slight change, *brightness*, and thinks that what is meant is the Aurora Borealis. Professor Davidson prefers *golden brightness* or *splendour*, which is said to come from the *north*, because the north *wind* clears away the clouds.

² Lit., *He disregardeth* (or doth not look upon) *all the wise in heart*. Compare our Lord's words, Matt. xi. 25. Renan freely translates, “Il n'honore pas d'un regard tous les sages de la terre.”

³ As some monster might be born.

What time I gave it clouds for raiment, 9
 And the thick darkness for its swathing,
 What time I brake its coast upon it,¹ 10
 Placed barriers and gates against it,
 Saying, "Hither shalt thou come, not further, 11
 And here shall thy proud waves be stayed"?
 Didst thou, within thy (little) lifetime, 12
 Impose decree upon the morning,
 Or teach the dawn its place, its function,—
 To seize the skirts of earth's (dark mantle), 13
 And shake from out her lap the wicked?
 New form hath she (on its appearing), 14
 As hath the clay beneath the signet,²
 And standeth forth as new-apparelled;
 While that which wicked men accounted 15
 As light to them, is then denied them,³
 And the uplifted arm is broken.

Hast thou approached the wells of ocean, 16
 Or trodden the great deep's recesses?
 The gates of death—have they been shewn 17
 thee?
 Gates of the Shadows—hast thou seen them?
 Earth's wide expanse hast thou considered? 18
 Tell me, if all these things thou knowest.

¹ Properly, *my limit*. The Hebrew word for "limit" means also a decree or statute. Hence the renderings in A.V. and R.V. The word "brake," of course, refers to the abrupt coast-line.

² The earth at dawn is compared to clay under a seal, or signet-ring; everything then stands out in clear outline. Fine clay, as in Babylonia, was used as wax. It may be, as Bishop Wordsworth suggests in his commentary, that there is an allusion to the revolving cylinders or prisms of Nineveh.

³ Paraphrase for "while *their* light (*i.e.*, the darkness) is denied the wicked."

The abode of Light—what way doth reach it ; 19
 Where also is the home of Darkness ;
 'That each (in turn, its task accomplished,) 20
 Thou shouldst convey unto its confines,
 Tracing the track to where it dwelleth ?
 Thou knowest,—born so long aforetime ! 21
 So great the number of thy days is !

(And) hast thou been where lie the treasures 22
 Of snow and hail : these hast thou witnessed,
 Which I reserve for time of trouble, 23
 For days of warfare and of battle ?

Say by what passage,¹ o'er earth's surface, 24
 The light of day hath its diffusion,
 Or spreadeth out the hot sirocco.
 Who cleft a channel for the rain-flood, 25
 A passage for the thunder-flashes,
 To bring the rain on lands unpeopled, 26
 On desert wastes where no man dwelleth,²
 To sate the dearth and desolation, 27
 And make them green with tender herbage ?

The rain—hath it, prithee, a father ? 28
 The dew-drops—who hath these begotten ?
 The ice—what mother's womb produced it ? 29
 The hoary frost of heaven—who bore it ?
 (See) water then as stone compacted, 30
 'The surface of the deep held captive !

¹ Or, method.

² Renan says well here : “ God insists on this circumstance in order to make man humble, and to show him that the earth has not been made by him, or for him ” (alone).

Bind'st thou the cluster of the Pleiads? 31
 Or wouldst thou loose Orion's fetters? 31
 Canst bring Mazzāroth² in its season, 32
 Or guide the Bear, beside her children? 32
 Know'st thou the orderings of the heavens? 33
 Or is it thou that dost determine
 Their influence⁴ o'er the earth (around thee)?

Wouldst raise thy voice unto the rain- 34
 cloud,
 And bring its wealth of waters on thee?
 Would lightnings issue at thy sending, 35
 And give the answer, "Here behold us!"?
 Who in the soul of things put wisdom, 36
 And forms endowed with understanding?⁵

¹ Orion was regarded by Eastern peoples as The Giant, bound with chains for having revolted against God.

² Many scholars conclude that, as this name is almost identical with that in 2 Kings xxiii. 5—*Mazzaloth*—it probably means the constellations, the signs of the Zodiac. But the word is, like Behemoth, not a plural. "In its season" naturally points to a single star, or at most to a single constellation. Schiaparelli thinks the planet Venus is meant, and says the signs of the Zodiac were never objects of worship, as was Mazzaloth in 2 Kings xxiii. 5.

³ The three projecting stars, which form the tail of the Great Bear. Here they are called children; and probably the whole line should be rendered, *Or soothe the Bear concerning her children*. Delitzsch favours this rendering, and cites the mythical legend in which the children of the Great Bear are represented as mourning over the dead body of their father, who had been slain by the Pole Star.

⁴ Empire.

⁵ R.V., "Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts, or who hath given understanding to the mind?" The words rendered "inward parts" and "mind" are rare and difficult words, the meaning of which in this connection is much disputed. They seem to refer here to the soul of *things* (not of *men*) and the phenomena or outward appearances of nature. The R.V. has in the margin, as alternatives, *dark clouds* and *meteor*, respectively.

Who mustereth the clouds by wisdom, 37
 And layeth prone the urns of heaven,
 The dust into a mass compacting, 38
 The earth-clods welding firm together?

Hunt'st thou her quarry for the lioness, 39
 Sating the craving of her young ones,
 What time they crouch within their caverns, 40
 Or lie in wait amid the thicket?
 Who is it catereth¹ for the raven,
 While unto God its young are crying
 And wandering restless in their hunger?

Know'st thou the rock-goat's time of bearing? 39
 Dost watch the hinds—what time they labour—
 Numbering the months of their gestation,
 And knowing the time of their delivery,—
 When they will couch, and cast their young
 ones, 3
 And quit them of their pangs of travail,—
 How then their kids grow fair and healthful,
 Maturing in the open uplands,
 Then wander forth, no more returning?

Who gave the onager² his freedom, 5
 And loosened the wild ass's fetters?
 —Whose dwelling-place I made the desert,
 And the salt steppe his habitation.
 The tumult of the town he scorneth,
 Nor ever heareth shout of driver;— 7

¹ Lit., *prepareth its “catch.”*

² The wild ass of the plains on the east of the Jordan. Two different names of the same animal are used here. The idea in “freeing” and “loosing” is taken from the liberation of slaves.

Roaming about the heights for pasture,
His quest whatever green thing groweth.

Would the wild ox submit to serve thee,
Or have his lodging in thy stable?
Couldst hold him, harnessed, in the furrow?
Or would he deign to drag the harrow
Athwart the valleys at thy leading?
So great his strength, how shouldst thou trust him,
Or let him loose where thou hadst laboured,¹
Or count on him to house thy harvest,
Or bring it to thy floor for threshing?

Proudly her wings the ostrich waveth;
Yet not the kindly stork's—those pinions;²
For on the ground her eggs she leaveth,
And in the sand doth heat (and hatch) them;
Ne'er thinking how a foot may crush them,
Or that some beast thereon may trample.
Unkindly treateth she her offspring,
As though they were not hers: her labour
May be for nought, but nought she careth;
For God hath blinded³ her to wisdom,
Imparting to her scant discernment.
Yet see her, wing and foot uplifting:⁴
Then doth she scorn both horse and rider!

¹ Strictly, *leave to him thy labour*. Labour here means the *produce* of his labour, the crops.

² This seems to be the meaning of this difficult line (lit., *is it the wing and feathers of a stork?*); the stork being the “pious bird,” more protective of her young than the ostrich. The stork gets her name *hasida* from the word *hasid*, kindly.

³ Made her forget.

⁴ Flapping upwards. But the phrase only occurs here, as do so many expressions in these chapters; and some think it refers to her *speed* in

Is it thou that giv'st the horse his prowess ? 19
 That cloth'st his neck with quivering tresses ?¹
 That mak'st him leap as doth a locust, 20
 With snort majestic, fear-inspiring ?
 (Behold him) pawing in the valley, 21
 Exulting in his pride of power,
 When going forth to face the weapons !
 Mocking at fear, and all-undaunted, 22
 Back from the sword he turneth never ;
 The while the quiver o'er him clasheth, 23
 And flashing spear and javelin hurtle.
 Furious his charge, the ground devouring,² 24
 He cannot stay—the trumpet soundeth !
 Oft as 'tis heard, “Aha !” he neigheth. 25
 Yea, from afar he scenteth battle,
 The thundering call of chiefs, the shouting.

Soareth the hawk taught by thy wisdom, 26
 As toward the south³ her wings she spreadeth ?
 Or mounteth at thy word the eagle, 27
 To build upon the height her eyrie ?
 The rock her home is, there she lodgeth,
 The pinnacle of rock her stronghold. 28
 Therefrom she spieth out her quarry,
 Her eye far distance penetrating. 29

Flight, which is of course achieved chiefly by running, though materially increased by the flapping of her wings. The verse shows how God gives her this compensating faculty, for all her foolishness.

¹ “Quivering tresses,” another expression, occurring only once, allied to the word for *thunder*, and also *shaking*.

² “An expression often found in Arabic poetry, intended to depict the speed of the horse, which, galloping with open mouth, appears to devour space and the ground in front of it” (Renan).

³ Knowing the time of migration.

Blood-suckers are her brood of nestlings : 30
 And where the slain are, there is she.¹

Also Jehovah in His answer to Job said :— 40

Shall one contending with the Almighty 2
 Be His reprobate? He that bringeth
 Charge upon God, this² let him answer.

Then Job answered Jehovah, saying :— 3

Lo, I am nought; what should I answer? 4
 With hand on mouth I will be silent.
 Once spoke I . . . nay, I will not answer: . . . 5
 Twice . . . but I will proceed no further.

And Jehovah answered Job out of the storm, 6
saying :—

Gird up thy loins and play the man, then. 7
 (This) will I ask, and do thou tell Me:
 Wouldst thou, then, nullify My justice? 8
 Wouldst put Me in the wrong, to right thee?
 Hast thou an arm to equal God's arm? 9
 Yea, with a voice like His wilt thunder?
 Deck thee with majesty, with splendour! 10
 Array thee in thy state, thy glory!
 Send forth the torrent of thine anger, 11
 All pride beholding and abasing,
 All pride beholding but to crush it,— 12
 O'erwhelming on the spot the wicked!

¹ I cannot spoil this fine line by one of my own; and no other words will express it.

May not this be the gier-eagle, or griffon-vulture, the *ἀετός* of Luke xvii. 37? And was not our Lord quoting this line when He said, as there, “Wheresoever the body is, there will the eagles (*ἀετοί*) be gathered together”? See Preface, p. xv.

² i.e., the “interrogation” just ended (xxxviii. and xxxix.).

Bury them in the dust together, 13
 Shrouding their faces in the darkness.
 This do, then I will bear thee witness, 14
 Even I, that thy right hand can aid thee.

See now Behēmoth,¹ whom I fashioned 15
 As well as thee—(the mighty creature),
 That ox-like feedeth on the verdure.
 See in his loins what strength resideth, 16
 And in the sinews of his belly !
 His tail he bendeth like a cedar ! 17
 See in his thighs the knitted muscles !
 As cylinders of brass his limbs are, 18
 His bones as heavy bars of iron !
 Him, foremost of God's operations, 19
 His Maker with his sword² presented,
 —So that the hills might yield him forage, 20
 Where all wild creatures should around him
 (Immune from terror)³ take their pastime.
 Under the lotus trees he croucheth, 21
 Or in the swamp, or in the reed-brake.
 The lotus trees with shade protect him, 22
 The willows by the brook begird him.
 Though swell the stream, he doth not hasten ; 23

¹ Behemoth is the plural of the Hebrew word for cattle ; but it is here singular, and is thought to be formed from the Egyptian word *Pehemont*, the name by which the river-horse, or hippopotamus, was called. The description suits better that of some antediluvian monster. Thomson, however, in *The Land and the Book*, considers the animal to be the buffalo ; and says : “With the aid of a little Oriental hyperbole, I can work up these buffaloes into very tolerable behemoth.”

² The animal's tusks and teeth.

³ His “sword” being given him only to shear the grass, he is harmless—like the Dinothereum of former ages.

Nor, though a Jordan's flood were brimming
 And reached his lip, would it concern him.
 Attack¹ him to his face who dareth,
 Or pierce his snout when in the meshes?²

24

Canst take Leviathan³ with a fish-hook? 41
 Or with a cable caust thou gag⁴ him?
 Or fix the rush-rope⁵ in his nostrils?
 Or with a spike⁶ pierce through his jaw-bone?
 Will he with many prayers entreat thee,—
 With timid, plaintive speech address thee?
 Or make agreement with thee, asking
 Thou take him for thy lifelong servant?
 Wouldst toy with him⁷ as with a sparrow?
 Or bind him, to (amuse) thy maidens?
 Shall companies of dealers purchase,
 And 'twixt the Canaanites⁸ divide him?
 Canst make his hide with darts to bristle,
 Or pierce his skull with fisher's trident?

2

3

4

5

6

7

7

¹ Lit., *take*, or *capture*.

² By putting in a ring, as is said to have been the custom with captured beasts. The whole of this verse, however, has been thought to have been displaced, in copying, from the beginning of the next chapter.

³ Here generally considered to be the *crocodile*, as suiting the description.

⁴ Lit., *press down his tongue*.

⁵ Such as fishermen used after their captures, for the purpose of carrying.

⁶ Here, probably, a tenter-hook is meant, by which the angler, as in Egypt even now, attached the fish with a line to the bank, and thus kept it alive for sale.

⁷ לְקַחַת. It is curious that exactly the same expression is used in Ps. civ. 26, which causes some to wish to translate that passage thus: "That Leviathan whom Thou hast made, *to toy with him*."

⁸ The Phœnicians, general name for traders.

Lay hand upon him once!—bethink thee 8
 What were the conflict! Spare him further.
 Ah, see thy hope of him confounded!
 Deterreth not his very aspect?

Who, then, is he,—since none so bold is 10
 As *him* to offer provocation,—
 That shall stand up in Mine own presence?
 (Or) who hath given to Me beforehand,
 That I must make him his requital?—
 All under heaven is My possession.

Nor of his parts will I be silent, 12
 Nor leave untold his mighty powers
 And fine perfection of his armour.

Who shall divest him of his mantle? 13
 Who come within his double fortress?¹
 His face's double door² who open?
 About his teeth resideth Terror.

Superb his scales, with grooves amid them: 15
 A seal's deep impress each appeareth;
 And one so close is to another
 No breath of air shall pass between them;
 Each to his fellow, so unite they,
 So lock, as never to be sundered.

His neesings are a flash of lightning,
 His eyes the eyelids of the morning.³
 Out of his mouth go burning torches,
 And sparks of fire leap forth escaping.

¹ His double rows of teeth. The word translated "bridle" in A.V. and R.V. is *Resen*, which was also the name of a fortress of Nimrod.

² His jaws.

³ *The eye-lashes of the dawn.* Was the author aware that in the Egyptian hieroglyphics the crocodile's eyes were the symbol of the dawn? (See Davidson's note.)

A vapour issueth from his nostrils,	20
As from some pot, or pool, when heated.	
His breath a fire of coals will kindle	21
When from his throat the flame proceedeth.	
See in his neck what strength resideth,—	22
How Terror danceth in his presence!	
His flesh,—how knit in flakes together:	23
How firm upon him, how unyielding.	
Firm as a stone the heart within him;	24
Yea, firm as is the nether millstone.	
The bravest tremble when he riseth,	25
And are beside themselves with terror.	
Lay sword upon him, sword is useless,	26
Useless the spear, the dart, the halberd.	
On iron as on straw he looketh,	27
On bronze as on decaying timber.	
Shafts from the bow ne'er find him fleeing;	28
Stones from the sling as chaff he counteth.	
As chaff, too, on the club he looketh;	29
Yea, laugheth at the hurtling javelin.	
With his sharp sherds beneath, he seemeth	30
A harrow ¹ on the mud extended!	
The pool he churneth like a cauldron,	31
Frothing the deep like pot of unguent;	
Leaving a gleaming path behind him;—	32
The abyss's hoary crown it seemeth!	
Upon the earth he hath no rival,—	33
A creature formed to be unfearing:	

¹ More properly, perhaps, a threshing-sledge, an instrument dragged over the corn, bruising the straw and separating the grain. Pieces of lava or other sharp substances were fixed under the sledge, with this object.

(Down) upon all high things he looketh,—
Of all the sons of pride¹ the monarch.

34

Then Job made answer to Jehovah, saying:—

42

I know Thou canst do all: that never
May purpose be withholden from Thee.

2

“Who darkened counsel without knowledge?”²

3

Ah true!³ in ignorance I uttered
Things far above me, things I knew not.

O hearken . . . let me speak . . . (Thou saidest)

4

“And I will first interrogate thee,

“Then do thou answer Me.”

(I answer):

By hearing of the ear aforetime

5

I heard, but now mine eye hath seen Thee.

Wherefore I make my retractation,⁴

6

And do repent, in dust and ashes.

¹ See xxviii. 8, and the note.

² Recalling God's first words (xxxviii. 2).

³ Lit., *On that account—that being so.*

⁴ Or, *I repudiate* (what I said). So Driver. Davidson, however, approves of either *retract* or *repudiate*.

THE EPILOGUE

(42)

AND so it was, after Jehovah had spoken 7
these words unto Job, that Jehovah said
unto Eliphaz the Temanite, My displeasure is
kindled against thee, and against thy two friends ;
for ye have not spoken concerning Me the thing
that is right, as My servant Job hath ; Now there- 8
fore take unto you seven bullocks and seven rams,
and go to My servant Job, and offer up for your-
selves a burnt offering ; and Job My servant shall
intercede for you ; for him I will accept ;—that
I may not visit (your) folly upon you ; for ye
have not spoken concerning Me the thing that is
right, as My servant Job hath.

Then went Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad 9
the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, and did
according as Jehovah spake unto them. And
Jehovah accepted Job.

And Jehovah turned the captivity of Job, when 10
he interceded for his friends ; and Jehovah added
to Job the double of all that he had before.

Then came there unto him all his brethren, and 11
all his sisters, and all his former acquaintances, and
did eat bread with him at his house ; and they
condoled with him and comforted him on account
of all the evil that Jehovah had brought upon him.

And they gave him each a piece of money,¹ and each a ring of gold.

So Jehovah blessed the latter end of Job more ¹² than the beginning. And he had fourteen thousand sheep and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen and a thousand she-asses.

Also he had seven sons and three daughters; ¹³ And he called the name of the first Jemima, and ¹⁴ the name of the second Kezia, and the name of the third Keren-happūch. And in all the land were ¹⁵ found no women so fair as the daughters of Job; and their father gave them an inheritance as well as their brothers.

And Job lived after this one hundred and forty ¹⁶ years; and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, (to) four generations.

And Job died, an old man and full of days. ¹⁷

¹ A *kesita*, value unknown.

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